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AN EMBROIDERY BOOK

ANCIENT EGYPTIAN, ASSYRIAN, AND PERSIAN COSTUMES AND DECORATIONS.

By Mary G. Houston and Florence S. Hornblower.

*Containing 25 full-page illustrations, sixteen of them
in colour, and 60 line diagrams in the text.*

Small crown quarto.

In this volume the history of Costume is traced from the earliest ages. The illustrations (which are taken chiefly from the British Museum) are given in facsimile from the drawings of the artists of the period, and, where the drawing is too primitive to be easily understood, a garment is also shown drawn in modern style; in addition, every type of garment illustrated is accompanied by a flat pattern showing the *cut*. Information of this special character on Ancient Costume is usually very difficult to obtain, and it is anticipated that the volume will be of first-rate importance to dress designers, to theatrical designers, and also to the schools in which historical costume and the history of the progress of the human race are subjects for study.

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PLATE I.



A TABLE MAT, (See page 41.)

AN EMBROIDERY BOOK

BY

ANNE KNOX ARTHUR
GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

CONTAINING SIXTEEN FULL-PAGE ILLUSTRATIONS
—EIGHT OF THEM IN COLOUR—AND EIGHTY-
SEVEN LINE ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE TEXT

A. & C. BLACK, LTD.
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"Go, little booke; God send thee good passage"

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TO
MY MOTHER

NOTE

THE Author's thanks are due to the owners of the pieces of embroidery illustrated in this book who kindly lent them to her for reproduction:—Miss Beatrice Brooks, Miss Marion Boyd, Miss Janetta S. Gillespie, Miss Mary A. Gill, Miss Martha Stevenson, Miss Elspeth Stewart, Miss Jessie Gibson (students of the Glasgow School of Art); also to Miss Kay, Parkhurst, Cedars, Derby, for the loan of three pieces worked by her pupils.

FOREWORD

Now that many of our busy working people have better regulations as regards the hours of the day's work, there is great need to provide occupation for the day's leisure ; and needlework, as a leisure craft, is one of the most refreshing and pleasant and profitable sources of entertainment—provided always, that those who undertake it realise that, with right thought and consideration on the part of every worker, each should become, as it were, a law unto herself, so that she should realise also that she need, under no circumstance, be the slave of old traditions, if she can give fitting reasons for making a change which is to the purpose of her work.

To be in a healthy and living state, our art should be constantly changing its fashion ; if it stands still, it is retrograde, and for some few generations we may say this of British embroidery. What changes it has undergone are due almost entirely to the commercial enterprise of manufacturers of printed patterns—usually foreign ones. The importation became very considerable with the introduction of so-called Berlin woolwork, and since that period the British needlewoman has set aside her own ingenious arrangements and follows blindly where the merchant leads, and British design for needle-

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work, as an expression of its people, is almost a dead thing.

Most people have a superstition that in knowledge of a multitude of stitches lies the whole mystery of needlework. This is emphatically not the case. There really is no mystery about stitches ; they are but the letters of the needleworker's alphabet, and the words of her language—to be used according to her own ideas. One may embroider poems ; another may embroider prayers and praises for her church ; another may beautify a fair woman's garment or sing a little song in stitches for a baby's robe ; yet another may be like a treatise on surgery, repairing and restoring that which has been damaged. But needlework does not exist for the stitches. It is the stitches which—as they are well or ill-used—express the worker, and, if she is a wise worker, she can find out for herself most of the stitches she needs. Nor is it necessary to be at great expense in needlework, indeed, for those who take it up as a recreative craft half the interest may lie in the fact that no material is too common or too homely to be made into something fitting and, therefore, beautiful—since the truest art is to make a thing pleasing to the eye and yet entirely suited to the purpose.

The commonest failing of the designers of this country is that they think that beauty lies in the elaboration of ornament, and this is why the fashions of British dress-makers fall short of those abroad. It is the little simple contrivances, that are almost no more than a sort of loving finish to the actual construction of a piece of work, that give the highest standard of style in garments :

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and the best training a needlewoman can have is to make her seams, hems, openings and fastenings of garments or household fitments things of beauty, while, at the same time, she considers the uses and purpose of her work. It is as a piece of engineering we should consider the construction of our household hangings and covers of our garments—planning that decoration should be coarse or fine, as fits the material, and taking thought also for the washing and wearing of it.

The fashions of to-day show a very marked tendency to decorative construction, due in great measure to a change in the needlework for school children introduced a few years ago. The tendency shows most interesting results, especially in the fact that the shaping of clothing has become very simple and that garments depend almost entirely on stitchery for their decoration, rather than on manufactured braids and trimmings; and the styles and shapes are infinitely less stereotyped, so that clothing for women tends to express more nearly the personality of the wearer than it has done for many generations.

The work of the hand—as apart from that of the machine—is more and more in demand, and decorative needlework, even in our shops, is becoming more to be desired, for unique and personal characteristics and expression, than it has been for a very long period. This being the case, let our needlewoman take courage and realise that in each mind there are possibilities of new ideas and new inventions—that all materials open up new opportunities, and that with little labour she may greatly enhance and beautify the things she works and find appreciative opening for her skill. Never was there

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such universal demand for handwork of every kind, and for such household fittings, which tend towards economy and labour saving in particular, the need is almost unlimited. Some of the most interesting embroideries done during the last few years have been planned and carried out in some of our Scottish schools by untrained workers—designs so simple that the workers do not realise that they are designing at all—since they draw largely with needle and thread alone, and have little assistance from chalk and other markings. And it is this type of work, usually sewn in coarse yarns and on rough canvas, flannel or homespun, that is perhaps the most happy and most stimulating for a designer of needle-work to begin on. The work is so quickly achieved—so gallant and bright in colour—so utilitarian in purpose and of so little cost in outlay, that it is above all others to be recommended. It needs no experience in stitchery to work in bright wools, if the material is firm and strong, and the writer has pleasant experience of maid-servants and village wives in the north country making admirable rugs, garments, and other embroideries, which command good prices at the Artificers' Guilds and other places where a high artistic standard of design is required.

It is only by means of such counter attractions in stimulating leisure crafts, which pay their way as well as give pleasure to the workers, that we can contend with the spirit of restless excitement and craving for mere pleasure-giving that is so marked a sign of the early days of peace, and reconstruction can only come by countering this mischievous tendency in young people by giving them something that gives stimulus to their longing for

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brightness and yet does not unduly tax those whose days may be occupied in strenuous employment.

How desirable it is that such gatherings of women and girls as church sewing meetings, guilds and clubs, should take up such new ideas in needlework and apply for a competent instructor. How almost more desirable is it that men might realise the pleasure a needle can give if applied to bold construction and original work.

It is by no means universal over the world that needlework is a women's craft ; in many countries it is done quite as much, if not more, by the men, and it is probable that if our men took up this craft, it would show a very marked tendency to individual and original expression.

The power of invention is so great and serious a factor, that it is almost too big a thing to touch upon here. We do not exaggerate its importance when we say that this faculty in human beings is what we can justly call the Holy Ghost, for it is that in us which comes, not of ourselves, but from direct inspiration, and the first principle of education ought to be to open our minds to it, in howsoever small and humble a fashion it comes, and to make clear the way for its development and growth towards greater things.

ANN MACBETH.

GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART.

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* These illustrations are in colour.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

“Give her of the fruit of her hands ; and let her own works praise her in the gates.”

NEEDLEWORK, as an artistic and practical craft, is highly interesting from a decorative point of view, and well within the scope of any intelligent worker. It has distinct advantages over most crafts—it neither requires great initial outlay for apparatus or materials, nor does it demand a special workshop ; thus, as a domestic art, it commends itself to many of us on account of its adaptability to the conditions of life, as well as for its decorative value—as a means of adding grace and beauty to our daily surroundings.

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries England was famed for the beauty and magnificence of its ecclesiastical embroideries. These wonderful works found their way into many countries and were eagerly sought after by patrons of the beautiful ; many pieces still exist, preserved in our museums, churches, or in private collections, to show us what extraordinary ability and invention these ancient embroiderers must

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have had. After the Reformation, when there was no longer the great demand for ecclesiastical work—embroiderers turned their attention to the decoration of garments to be worn by the wealthier classes. In the “Golden Days of Good Queen Bess,” and for some time later, all the ingenuity and skill formerly applied solely to church work was bestowed on the decoration and beautifying of personal clothing—dresses, cloaks, coats, waistcoats, caps, gloves, etc. ; neither time, labour, nor expense was spared, the worker’s ideal evidently being to obtain the highest result of which he or she was capable. Some of the quaint pattern books of those days still exist, and they consist mostly of elements—dainty flower sprays, sprigs, fruits, birds, animals, fishes, border patterns and geometrical forms—all intended to assist the workers in the composition and building up of their designs and patterns.

In the busy world of nowadays, we cannot hope ever to attain to such perfection, nor to regain for embroidery the high position it once held in this country ; but we still have many clever needlewomen who could produce beautiful work provided they had a better knowledge of how to set about it.

This book has been planned with the hope that it may be of use to many, and that it may create in both girls and women the desire to construct and decorate for themselves those simple articles of daily use which cost so much to buy and which can be made and embroidered, in simple patterns, with a little knowledge of construction and stitchery, at a moderate expenditure of time and money.

Introductory

Perhaps the reason why so many workers buy their materials already stamped with a design, which often proves unsuitable to the purpose for which it is intended, and which gives small satisfaction when embroidered, is because of a certain distrust of themselves, a want of knowledge of their own powers of invention and ingenuity ; or it may be a lack of energy and initiative, a reluctance to plan and create for themselves, due to the fact that they have never been taught to express their own ideas, but rather to depend on those of others. Nevertheless, the sense of beauty is, in a greater or less degree, common to us all. Why, therefore, should a needleworker not develop her own ideas rather than those of other workers ? The designer, for example, who may have as little knowledge of stitchery as the needlewoman has of design, and who, therefore, cannot realise the labour involved in its execution, may lose much of his effect and may waste the time of the embroiderer. It is generally agreed that no two people have the same ideas ; it is surely, then, of considerable importance that each one should at least make some attempt to express his or her own. If scope is given to the creative and inventive powers they, like other faculties, will grow in a most inspiring manner ; new ideas, inherent instincts, perhaps dormant hitherto, will spring up like flowers to encourage the beginner on the upward path, and as interest becomes keener and confidence grows, difficulties which at first appeared insurmountable will quietly disappear as the worker plans and thinks out a piece of embroidery from the foundation. How interesting and attractive it will be to execute such

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a piece of work, which will express the personality of the worker in all parts, design, colour and stitchery. Greater technical excellence, as well as charm, must accrue ; the embroideress will work with more judgment and understanding, and because it has gained so much in interest to her, she will be able to express herself more freely, and her work will convey and suggest more to others.

CHAPTER II

THE ART AND CRAFT OF EMBROIDERY—THE SIX POINTS

“Chaires, Stooles and Screen, the same, all of Satten Stitch done in Worsteads.”

WE shall now consider the six important points of design.

Art and Craft.—Many women have an inherent instinct for needlework—that is, the craft of the needle—for the knowledge of how to use a needle and thread is generally easily acquired ; but it is quite otherwise when the design, the artistic or imaginative part, has to be carried out, as it ought to be, by the worker. Then all sorts of difficulties arise, mostly imaginary, as those who make an attempt may find.

Let us here consider the design as a necessary part of the workmanship. We shall be ambitious enough to study embroidery from an artistic point, for the art and the craft ought surely to go hand in hand.

The Habit of Design.—A special knowledge of drawing is not essential for pattern making—a child will make delightful patterns—nor for simple designs composed of straight lines and geometrical forms, such as might be happily applied to borders for articles of daily household use or for personal wear. A ruler, a compass and a sheet of squared paper are sufficient for initial efforts : and once the habit of simple designing is acquired

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it can become a wonderfully absorbing pastime, for eyes that are opened to see will find designs on every side.

Good Taste and Common Sense.—To carry out a piece of work successfully, however, the embroideress must possess good taste and common sense ; these are indeed important qualities, the possession of which will help the beginner enormously : add to these an eye for colour and form, a practical knowledge of the stitches commonly in use, some acquaintance with materials, their utility and adaptability, and the worker will find herself fairly well equipped to start her design.

The Six Points.—There are about six points to be considered in connection with a piece of embroidery :—

The Object and its Use.—We must decide this, bearing in mind the position the work will occupy when finished ; choosing a material suitable for the purpose, and with due regard to the restrictions of economy.

The Colour Scheme.—Consider the environment, and let the scheme be in harmony with or in contrast to the background and surroundings.

The Construction.—Plan carefully and arrange for the decoration, which should never interfere with the usefulness of the finished work.

The Building up of the Pattern.—This should always be done with a view to the limitations of the material.

The Stitchery.—This must also be adapted to the material—with bold, effective types for the coarser woven stuffs, and daintier, closer stitchery for the firmly woven textiles.

Finishing Touches.—A beginner rarely realises the importance of these, yet it is well worth while bestow-

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ing thought on them ; interest may be considerably heightened by such additions or an otherwise good piece of work rendered less attractive by lack of care and thought at the final stages.

It will now be seen that the design—the least mention of which strikes terror to the soul of the uninitiated—does not consist in the drawing or the making up of the pattern alone, and that there are important preliminary stages to be gone through. Indeed the design is well on its way by the time the worker reaches the fourth point, *i.e.*, the building up of the pattern.

THE FIRST POINT : ON THE CHOOSING OF MATERIALS, THREADS, TOOLS, ETC.

Materials.—Materials, threads, and needles are important items, and should be chosen carefully ; to spend time and labour on embroidery on a poor foundation is an extravagance rather than an economy—the tendency being to make up for the poorness of the quality by the profuseness of the decoration. Materials need not be costly, but they should be good of their kind.

Homely Materials.—Charming things can be made out of homely cloths, remnants and oddments. Texture, tone and colour should be considered, both from a practical and an artistic point of view ; a background that is pleasant to work upon is always an advantage. Linens, of varying quality and texture, can be relied upon for domestic purposes—they make for good stitchery, they wash well, and are very durable. (Plate VII.) Some unbleached materials are extremely economical.

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Greenhouse Shading.—A soft creamy netting used for greenhouse shading, which may be obtained from any of the large seed merchants, is made in different widths from 54 inches to 72 inches. It has an open mesh and lends itself to all types of darning and needle-weaving—the narrow widths make excellent semi-transparent sash curtains, which may be brightened by applied bands of coloured linen or chintz, and finished with rows of simple running or tacking stitch in wools or in some of the coarser makes of embroidery cottons. (Plate VIII.) The thicker quality has a closer mesh and is admirable for coverlets and hangings. These, when edged and decorated with lines of bright-coloured washing braids, and wide borders of coloured cretonnes—which again may be connected with bars of needle-weaving or darning, or any simple stitchery—make charming and economical articles, such as any housewife might well be proud to possess. (Plates V. and VI.) Covers and runners to match might complete the set. This would be a pleasant and instructive work for a girl's leisure hours; she might make just such a set for her bedroom, with the addition of chair covers and cushions, adorning them beautifully with some simple design and a colour scheme of her own choosing.

Damask and Huckaback.—Damask linens, with simple-patterned backgrounds, twilled sheetings, of various makes, and huckabacks, can be used most effectively for runners, mats, and luncheon sets; the soft, warm, creamy tone of the unbleached material blends harmoniously with bright-coloured threads and wools.

Titian Canvas.—Many coarser and more loosely

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woven textures make most charming and desirable backgrounds for bands of needle-weaving. (Plate VI.) Coarse canvas in various colourings, woollen hopsacks, floor-cloths, etc., are adaptable for many household articles.

Russian Crash.—A common roller towelling, or Russian crash, as it is also called, is a delightful material (Plate III.), and may be had in narrow widths, varying from 12 inches to 24 inches ; it is woven by the Russian peasantry in small handlooms and varies considerably in texture and quality—but in all cases it is a most durable and suitable linen for domestic purposes.

The Scottish Blanket.—Another pleasing material for wool decoration is the well-washed, worn-out Scottish blanket ; with the smaller pieces one can make hassocks and cushions which look wonderfully well in strong colours in any flat stitch ; the larger single blanket can be used for coverlets or hangings—with applied decoration where the material is too frail for general hard wear. Decorated with edgings of woollen braids, etc., these will look almost new, and certainly will give immense satisfaction to the worker.

Threads are to be had in great variety and in different makes, many of which are excellent for embroidery. Cottons and flaxes in various sizes and thicknesses in a large range of colours can be combined most successfully.

Embroidery Wools.—Wools and yarns, particularly the types known as fingering, in three, four, and five-ply, are reliable both in colour and quality. It is always advisable to shrink wools before using them for

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embroidery if they are to be applied to articles which require frequent washing. Crewel and tapestry wools, to be had in hanks, "white heather" mending in balls, are very convenient for needle-weaving and canvas work, and they may be had in beautiful colours.

Silks.—Silks of different makes, embroidery or knitting, filose, filo-floss and a soft, thick variety known as "Tyrian," are all good for various purposes. The latter is particularly useful for couching lines; filo-floss—a bright, glossy silk with no twist in it—requires some skill in the manipulating of it, therefore filose or mallard floss, each of which has a slight twist on it, is better for the less-skilled worker. Carpet chenilles in colours, both cotton and woollen, applied to coarse canvas or sacking, are used for the making of mats and rugs. Woollen and mohair, cotton and brush braids of the common skirt type, carpet and binding braids, cords and French tapes, coloured and washing gimps, all may be used with advantage for embroidery. It is better to shrink some of the loosely woven skirt and carpet braids before applying them to the material, or they are apt to pucker the material after washing.

Good needles should always be used, with well-drilled, good-sized eyes. Care should be taken to choose them so that they may be exactly suited to the thread and to the material; the eye should be large enough to hold the thread easily, in which case it will make a hole in the foundation of a sufficient size to allow the thread being pulled through without roughening it. Scientific sharps are very pleasant to use—numbers four, five and six, are suitable for cotton and flaxes, crewel and chenille, and

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long-eyed sharps for general embroidery and needle-weaving. For openwork backgrounds such as are shown in Plate XI, H, I, J, K, L, where no threads are withdrawn from the material, a special needle with a large thick stem and a small eye is used ; it separates the threads of the material and makes them easier to gather into groups by means of the tightened thread.

In working on loosely woven materials—such as canvases—and for weaving patterns, tapestry, chenille, or rug needles with blunt points are the most comfortable to use ; if these are not to hand, work with the eye of the needle foremost.

A well-fitting thimble, preferably vulcanite or silver lined with steel, is necessary. It should be deeply pitted to catch the eye of the needle and well finished, so as not to roughen the thread. Scissors of different sizes are required : a large pair with one sharp and one rounded point—these for the cutting and preparing of the material ; a small sharply pointed pair for the snipping of threads ; a special pair with a little square knob on the one blade and a sharp point on the other for cutting out threads and sections between embroidered and openworked parts ; these are a safeguard and prevent the snipping of the work.

Frames are not necessary for the simpler types of work, but for wide borders in needle-weaving, particularly for the novice, a frame will fix the warp threads by keeping them taut, and prevent puckering of the material—little tambour frames which consist of a couple of rings, the one fitting into the other, will serve the purpose.

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Finally, a small emery cushion, for polishing the needle should it get sticky or rusty, a piece of beeswax is useful for flax threads, a stiletto for piercing eyelet holes, a yard measure, a bodkin, and some small pins, are all necessary items, which should always be at hand when wanted.

THE SECOND POINT: THE COLOUR SCHEME.

Colour lends an inexpressible charm to our daily life—it is in nature that it exists in greatest beauty. The wonderful robe of colour which she displays for us throughout all seasons and in all countries, through the flowers and fruits, trees and foliage, sea and sky, the birds, animal and insect life, all under different aspects and ever-varying circumstances, increase our admiration and pleasure. We reflect and gratify our need for colour in our intimate surroundings—dress, hangings, furniture, carpets, pottery and pictures. The embroideress who has a fine instinct for colour will arrange a scheme wherein beautiful combinations of hues, tints, and shades will mingle and produce a harmonious whole. It is for those less favoured that the following hints are given. A knowledge of the principles of colour will serve as a guide, while the use of a chromatic circle, *i.e.*, a colour circle, will be invaluable to the beginner. This convenient arrangement wherein successive strips of all the colours are placed concentrically in their due proportions—as in the prismatic spectrum—will enable her to study the varieties, the relations and the peculiarities of colour and help her to arrange and select

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those hues, tints and shades which will combine well together; it will aid her to obtain happy effects with some appreciation of its harmonies and contrasts.

The three primary colours, green, red and blue—green being now generally accepted as a primary instead of yellow—offer the greatest contrast to each other. They are the strongest and most powerful and exercise a greater influence on the mind than any of the others; add to these, orange, yellow, violet, white and black—the sum of these six colours constitutes white, and the absence of all, black—and we have the eight from which all the other colours and their modifications can be made, easily and systematically.

Red (Complementary Colour, Bluish-Green).—

Red, the strongest and most powerful, excites and stimulates the eye. It was the first colour to be used for decorative purposes by primitive man, and the first to receive a name: it is the most predominant of the warm colours, and on account of its fresh, bright, cheerful character, is much used by beginners; but this very assertive quality makes it rather difficult to combine with other hues, therefore it is well to use it in small quantities for general purposes. Red, in different hues, has always been the symbol of power and distinction. Scarlet has been used for regal robes and state ceremonies, as well as for military purposes—it indicates bloodshed and war, fierceness and courage. Red of a rosy hue signifies divine love. It has been a favourite colour with the poets from the days of Homer to our own time. The complementary of red is bluish-green.

Blue (Complementary Colour, Yellow).—Blue

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followed red—it is of a quiet retiring nature, soft and soothing in effect, imparting the same quality to all the hues in which it predominates. It is one of the cool colours and is symbolically emblematical of heaven, piety, and intelligence. The complementary of blue is yellow.

Green (Complementary Colour, Purple).—Green, the most prevalent colour in nature, and the least stimulating, has a remarkably distinct and striking effect on the eye. It is highly refreshing as well as soothing, and is the necessary restful colour, the opposite of red. Yet the nervous power of the eye is sooner exhausted by strong greens than by any other hue; thus, a piece of work with a preponderance of green is not so pleasing to look at constantly as the piece where blue predominates. Symbolically, green is the emblem of bountifulness, youth, happiness and prosperity. The complementary of green is purple (violet-red).

Yellow (Complementary Colour, Blue).—Yellow approaches white, and is therefore a brilliant and advancing colour. It possesses the greatest power of reflecting light; is rather difficult to combine unless modified. Bright yellow has been used emblematically, to express charity, joyousness, plenteousness and old age—greenish-yellow is the symbol of jealousy and envy. Its complementary is blue.

Orange (Complementary Colour, Greenish-blue).—Orange, coming between red and yellow, partakes of the nature of both—it expresses warmth, fruitfulness and wealth. The complementary colour is blue with a tinge of green.

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Purple (Complementary Colour, Green).—Purple is the quietest of the rich colours, being composed of red and blue. It varies in tone according to the amount of its constituents. When blue is predominant it is symbolical of mourning, expressive of sorrow, sadness, and is called violet; when inclining to red it becomes warmer and richer. It expresses dignity, pomp, and regal power. Its complementary colour is green.

These six bright colours, when used in conjunction with black and white, with each other, or with their complementaries, will strengthen, intensify and enrich each other without altering their true value—when such vivid effects and sharp contrasts offend the taste of the worker, when they appear too crude, too conspicuous and too obtrusive—which they are apt to do—they may be harmonised quite simply, either by modifying the complementaries or by using a tint or a shade, that is, a lighter or a darker tone of the same colour. The strength and potency of these startling contrasts are in this way tempered; they become less glaring, less assertive, pleasanter and simpler to arrange, and lose the jarring effect they might have if used in their full brilliancy. For simple household articles with little decoration these bright colours may be used with charming effect. It is well to remember, in choosing the tints and shades of a colour, that the foundation material will have a considerable influence on them. On a white ground they will appear stronger and brighter, their tone being heightened by the white or light background, while on a black ground they appear more distinct and brilliant, particularly light ones, the contrast being greater. Dull

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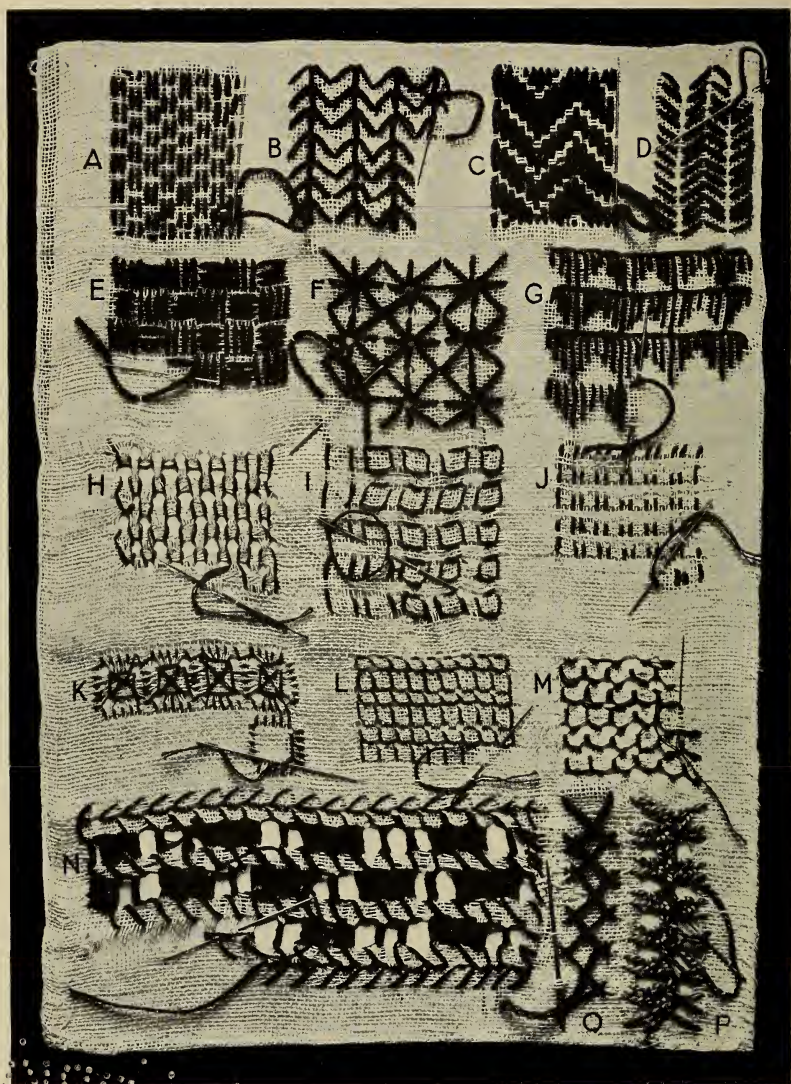
hues gain in brightness when used with black and lose accordingly when combined with white.

Juxtaposition of Colour.—Colours, then, when associated, influence each other simultaneously in various ways, darkening and lightening, adding to or detracting from, as the case may be—thus, by placing a light and dark one in contact, for example, black and white, the former looks blacker, intenser, while the latter looks more startlingly white on account of its dark neighbour.

It is advisable, also, in arranging the colour scheme—after taking materials and positions into consideration—to determine at the very outset what the leading features are to be, and to have *one* colour in the scheme more predominant than the others, either in intensity or in area. There should be some central point or points of interest which will attract the eye to certain parts of the construction.

A Dominant Colour.—A liberal use of a dominant colour, by conveying a definite impression, will give decision of character as well as beauty of tone to the work, while a vague, uncertain, or too equally distributed arrangement will leave an unsatisfied and indefinite impression on the mind.

There are abundant suggestions to be had from fields, hedgerows, flowers, plumage of birds, etc., for the embroideress who can adapt them to her purpose, but a simpler plan for the beginner is to choose her colour scheme from a good picture, a coloured illustration, a piece of chintz, cretonne or good brocade, or, when possible, to study the various pieces of old embroidery preserved in our museums, as a record of the time



SOME USEFUL STITCHES (See p. 29)

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when we could compete with other countries, when embroidery was almost the sole occupation of women of rank, as it was of the occupants of the convents.

Green.—If we were to use one of the primaries as a dominating colour, say green, a bluish-green, we might have as a background a deep pomegranate red, the design could be worked out in bluish-greens, grey-greens, soft blues and purples, with touches of pale chamois yellow here and there; all the colours should have a tinge of bluish-green, the combining colour.

Blue.—Or we might choose blue, the pleasantest, simplest and most harmonious combining colour, and select as a background a warm white or cream. The decoration could be carried out in various tones of blue, deep rich blue, turquoise, deep and pale orange, and a blue grey—much would depend on the tones used in combination and the manner in which they were employed. Always avoid a spotty effect, and do not contrast colours too suddenly in an endeavour to emphasise special points.

Red.—Red, when used as the predominant or combining colour, looks best on a dark blue or a cream background. With a dark blue ground, white or cream, bright greens and a touch of dull orange will work in well with the reds, the former combining to make the latter less assertive. With a white ground and the same colours, the work becomes suggestive of some of the beautiful Bokhara embroideries in which reds, greens, blues and yellows—the latter used sparingly—are combined so gaily and instinctively.

CHAPTER III

CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN

“A cunning workman, an embroiderer in blue and in purple and in fine linen.”

WE shall now discuss the decorative points.

The construction and the building up of the pattern may be taken together.

A Simple Pattern in Needle-weaving.—The simplest design for an initial effort should be one which could be executed in needle-weaving such as is illustrated in Plate I. Here the spaces for the decoration are marked off on the material, there being no necessity to put any design on to paper—the weaving may be done in any simple primitive pattern, or from some of the more interesting darning pattern samplers, or it may follow some idea or fanciful invention of the worker. It should be more or less symmetrical in colour and form, and provided that sufficient thought is taken in arranging the colour scheme and that the technique is good, the result should be both pleasing and decorative. (See Chapter V. on needle-weaving.) Supposing the material and the colour scheme to have been already decided, and that a loosely woven texture—which demands a simple conventional pattern with bold stitchery and bright colour effects—has been chosen (let it be a runner, table cover or any article suitable for

Construction and Design

household use). It would be best, as simplicity must be the keynote, to have a marginal or border design, built up entirely on straight lines and geometrical forms. First plan out the material and arrange for the decoration ; decide whether the pattern is to be placed on to a wide hem, or inside a narrow one, or whether it is to be applied as wide bars at the ends and edges of the runner. The limited space at the disposal of the designer will often aid and suggest the pattern.

The decoration should, when possible, strengthen the construction. Be careful at all times to place it where it will not interfere with the usefulness of the object. A cushion, for example, ornamented with raised embroidery or with large beads, conveys the idea of *discomfort* rather than of comfort, which is, after all, the *raison d'être* of a cushion, the addition to a room, by means of colour and decoration, being a secondary point.

In the early days, when decoration was so freely applied by primitive peoples to seams, hems, shoulder-straps, indeed to all objects, it was their aim to increase the usefulness of the article rather than to decorate it.

A Border Pattern.—When the above-mentioned points have been decided, take squared paper, ruler, and pencil, and draw a few nicely spaced lines ; duplicate the outer ones to give weight to the edges. All these lines crossing at the corners will form the framework of the design. Regularity and order are as essential in needlework as in most crafts, therefore the care and precision taken in the earlier stages will aid in the working of the later.

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The Construction.—Plan carefully and arrange for the decoration, which should never interfere with the usefulness of the finished work.

The Corners.—The treatment of the corners presents the greatest difficulty. In a frame they are structurally the weakest parts ; for this reason the ornamentation is placed at these parts to bind and strengthen, as well as to decorate them. In a piece of needlework with a simple border design they are again the most important. One expects to find unity, enrichment and massiveness there where the lines cross ; we add, therefore, a few extra lines or chequers to the corners. By this means we enlarge them, and by so doing append dignity and importance. Still greater emphasis and the necessary note of interest will be given by the colour and the stitchery—the treatment of which should always be in the foreground of the mind of the designer.

Principle of Repetition.—Do not aim at great variety of form ; repetition is one of the first principles of design. The beginner will save herself much worry and labour if she keeps this principle before her, instead of striving—as she invariably does—after variety. She should make her form—a square, an oblong, or whatever simple element she may have chosen—recur at regular intervals, and all corners should be alike.

Masses connected by Lines.—Masses should be joined by connecting lines and the spacing so arranged as to give value to the rest of the work.

Value of Spaces.—A form or element should never be cramped into a space nor stretched out unduly in

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order to fill one; it should be planned and balanced to look as if it just belonged to it. A design is well balanced when the elements are so adjusted that they are neither too monotonous by over repetition nor confused by too much variation.

Diagonal Lines.—It is safer at the earlier stages to avoid diagonal lines, or forms made up of such lines, for several reasons: they give a restless effect which should be avoided if possible, they present to the embroideress considerable difficulty of manipulation—coming, as they must, on the bias of the material, which may easily be tightened, puckered or pulled out of shape in the working by the inexperienced hand.

The Game of Design.—There is really no limit to the possible patterns which may be built up on straight lines and geometrical forms. The needlewoman has only to try with a ruler, pencil and squared paper in order to discover that she may, after some little practice, make most elaborate designs with interesting results. There are, of course, certain fundamental principles which will help her, but they are not many, and with the suggestions already given she should be able to arrange many simple designs suitable for her own use. It might be quite a pleasant occupation for the younger members of a household, on a winter's evening, to start and play at design. A time limit, perhaps a quarter of an hour for the first effort, and a longer period as the patterns became more elaborate, might be given; afterwards all the designs could be exchanged, compared, criticised, and then judged by an older member. In this way a "habit" of pattern making might be cultivated. Many of the

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designs should prove valuable to the craft worker as well as interesting to the youngsters.

Circles.—From the making of patterns with straight lines we go on to circular forms, with radiating lines. This opens up a wide field to the embroideress, allowing her to extend and vary her simple designs indefinitely.

With this new element, the circle, she can formulate some of the more definite floral shapes, and arranging them in an orderly manner, symmetrically, can make a geometrical pattern suitable to her purpose; she can make use of compasses, or if these instruments are not at hand, any circular form, such as a plate or a coin, will suit admirably. Should these prove too small, there is always the simple device of the fixed pin encircled by a thread, with the pencil at the opposite end, which, when the pin is held firmly in the centre of the space—as the thread must remain taut—will form a circle, the size being fixed by the length of the thread.

Circles at once suggest natural forms and growth, but to begin with the young designer must keep to the geometrical side of Nature; natural floral forms will come later. If she examines carefully a number of the flowers of the field or hedgerow she will find that many of these beautiful forms are built up on a geometrical basis—she will note the radiating lines of the flowers, the sepals, petals and stamens, the venation of leaves, the manner in which the mid-rib gives off, gradually, the beautiful curving lines which flow into the outer edges, and the wonderful orderliness of the little seeds clinging

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to the sides or centre of the seed vessel, and thus she will realise that all curving lines are but segments, or parts of circles of various sizes.

To aid the designer in her first efforts let her turn to an elementary text-book on botany—she will probably find there a number of diagrams of horizontal sections of the commoner wild flowers. These give the plan of each flower typical of the family to which it belongs—all the parts are arranged symmetrically in circles or whorls, and show how the flower is built up. The embroideress should find these sections full of suggestions; she might take the simpler forms to begin with and elaborate them, adding fresh details where necessary for the development of her design. By comparing the sections of one flower with another—of the wild rose with the poppy, the purple loosestrife with the forget-me-not, the primrose with the daffodil—she will be able to obtain variety with simplicity and balance; then she will connect and join all the masses with straight or curved lines, and thus give completeness to her design.

With increased knowledge of the structure of flowers the embroideress will gain a keener sense of observation which will be of great value when she studies the natural forms.

Setting forth once more on the high adventure of making her own design, she will bring to her aid the principles already learnt in the making of straight lines while she was building up her patterns and designs.

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THE FIFTH POINT: THE STITCHERY.

We express ourselves and our ideas in embroidery by means of stitches and colour.

To have pleasure in the craft, the needlewoman must have a fairly accurate knowledge of the technique. Stitchery should at all times be as simple as possible, and carefully adapted to the material and the design.

Simpler Types of Stitchery.—The commoner types, those which by experience and long use have been proved to be the most beautiful or the most practical, are the best. All the more complicated forms are merely modifications or combinations of these simple types, many of which are used in “plain” needlework. There are, in fact, few stitches which a careful worker cannot master in a very short time.

Stitchery not the Most Important.—It is wise to remember that stitchery is not the most important factor, but only one of the many which go to the making of good and artistic work. Beauty, in needlework, consists, not in the variation and elaboration of stitch, but in the harmony of material and technique, as well as of form and colour.

Unity of Stitch.—Where coloured threads are used it will often be found advantageous to adopt one stitch only. Many of the charming pieces of embroidery stored up in our museums give us an idea of what can be done in this way, and though we lack, perhaps, both time and patience nowadays, there is no reason why we should not, by cultivation of our tastes, raise the level of the art considerably above its present standard and

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prove that we can still produce embroidery—of the modest, reticent type—adapted to our own conditions of life, which will reveal both refinement and artistic delight.

To execute a piece of work in one stitch would be excellent practice for the young embroideress, whereby she would learn to know and use a stitch in all its varied aspects. She need not fear monotony—the coloured threads will give sufficient variety. Let her take the simplest of all stitches to begin with—the tacking or basting stitch—and keeping it and its many varieties in her mind when planning out the pattern, she will find that she has many delightful ways of executing it. Tacking or basting stitch, worked in rows, becomes simple darning, a background stitch with which she may make charming patterns and fillings, *ad libitum*. (Plates II. and XII.) Worked closer, it is a running stitch, wherewith braids may be tacked in place (Plate IV.), frills gathered up, seams of frocks connected, or smocking prepared. Finally, when worked with the same quantity of thread on the under and upper surfaces of the material, it attains a new dignity, and becomes satin stitch—the stitch beloved of the young modern needlewoman, who is generally inspired and stimulated by the wonderful skill and precision of the Eastern needleworkers.

White Backgrounds.—White backgrounds, when embroidered in white or with only a little colour, may have much greater variation in stitchery; it is a relief to the worker and an improvement to the work—indeed, should the embroideress feel so disposed, she has here the opportunity of displaying her knowledge of stitchery

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to a considerable extent, always keeping, of course, within the limits of good taste.

She should endeavour to suit the stitchery to the work, to produce the desired effect without too much labour—not that work should ever be done in a hasty or untidy manner—but, as said before, she should adapt it to its purpose. It is well to remember that large pieces of embroidery, generally seen from a distance, demand bold, effective treatment ; detail is lost, so can be omitted ; smaller pieces, seen at closer range, should bear inspection, therefore more delicate treatment may be applied ; detail and finer stitches can be seen to advantage. (See Chapter XII. for stitches and the method of working.)

THE SIXTH POINT: THE FINISHINGS.

The aim of the embroideress is to make her work beautiful, as well as suitable for her purpose. If she has the gift of originality she will also make it distinctive, possibly unconsciously, by adding here and there those little touches of individuality which will mark the work as characteristic of herself.

It is in the finishings that she has most scope for these dainty devices ; for by their means she may add interest and artistic detail to the simple garment or article of domestic use and render them charming things to look at. She may attain this end, not by obtaining expensive fitments, rich cords and silk tassels, such as are sometimes applied, most unsuitably, to embroidered cushions, table squares, and other objects that require frequent

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washing, but by the use of braids (Plate VI.), and bindings (Plate VIII.), and bands (Plate IV.), hand-made cords and tassels, linings, edges, fringes, beads and buttons, raffia and plaited straw.

Thus, the amateur will find it well worth while giving some thought to the making-up and finishing off of her embroidery. She will soon realise, too, the possibilities of making many of these ingenious devices herself wherewith to adorn her work, and she will feel well repaid in the end when she has contrived some simple embellishment at little extra cost.

Hand-made cords and tassels (Figs. 38A and 41), fringes and edgings (Figs. 34 and 42), may soon be made by skilful fingers ; bright-coloured skirt braids and carpet bindings and hand-made cords of dyed string or wool give a decorative effect to hems and borders—a wide hem looks well with a heading of brush braid or a piping of coloured galoon or narrow Russian braid oversewn with wool, or a narrow band of needle-weaving. Material and edges may be joined, chair backs and runners may be brightened, dress fitments may be completed simply, artistically and economically, by means of these braids, connected with dainty joining stitches (Figs. 26 and 29).

Wools of various qualities may be brought into service to make fringes and cords for cushions, etc. ; seams may be decorated and joined with insertion stitches, worked by hand (Fig. 25), or by the crochet needle (Fig. 63) ; fastenings may be secured by latchets of wool, thread, or silk, or cord, all of which are easy of manipulation and much prettier than machine-made articles.

By referring to Plate XIII., it may be seen that much

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may be achieved by means of braid in the decoration of a useful bag ; for description, see page 153.

Charming hand-made braids which may be used for many purposes, such as waist cords, latchets, ties, belts, hat bands (Fig. 40), may be made by means of an embroidery frame, a lace cushion or a small hand loom.

For the handles and joinings of bags, see chapter on needle-weaving.

Beads and buttons are useful for ornamentation—they give richness and weight wherever they may be placed ; and as an addition to fringes (Fig. 35), tassels and ties, they are most effective. Flat beads and buttons may be applied to embroidery provided they do not interfere with the use of the object ; this they would do if it were in such constant use as to require frequent washing.

Small beads may often take the place of French knots, giving much the same appearance to a border or hem.

Washing galoons and gimps, bindings and trimmings, may be effectively applied to dainty little tea and luncheon sets, as well as to children's dresses and overalls, they may be further embellished with narrow borders of needle-weaving worked in coloured cottons or in flax threads.

For method of making fringes, tassels and braids, etc., see Chapter XI.

CHAPTER IV

DARNING STITCHES—BACKGROUNDS AND FILLINGS

“The needle’s work pleased her, and she graced it.”

THERE is an infinite variety of pattern to be made with darning stitches, and fortunately many needlewomen have sufficient originality to invent little variations to suit their work and material. Most of the patterns on Plate II. are intended to be worked on a loosely woven foundation where the threads are easily counted, such as some of the coarser linens, single thread canvases, greenhouse shading, and tammy cloth for finer work. These darning patterns are better worked with a blunt needle and a long thread, as it is rather awkward, at times, to join new threads in the middle of a pattern, especially an openwork one (see Fig. H). Simple fillings like these may greatly enhance the effect of a piece of embroidery. It will be seen by referring to Plate II. that they might be worked so as to form quite a number of patterns in straight lines (Fig. A), in waves or chevron pattern (Fig. C), in clusters or stars (Fig. F), in lines of slanting stitches (Fig. D), in groups of squares or chequers (Fig. E), in vandykes (Fig. G), or in any of the openwork stitches as Figs. J and L.

A Simple Openwork Filling.—Fig. J is a pretty little pattern suitable for a border, for the foot of a

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child's frock, for a jumper, for table mats, or for any article where a dainty openwork appearance is wanted. It consists of straight lines in a vertical overcast stitch, worked in rows, from left to right and from right to left.

These upright stitches are in groups of two, worked over four threads of the material ; each row is separated from the other by two strands of the material.

To Work Fig. J.—Unfortunately the Fig. J does not show this filling to advantage. When the pattern is worked it will be seen that the intervening strands, in conjunction with the open spaces, form tiny little crosses, which add transparency to the work.

A filling more tedious to work, but with a more open appearance, is got by overcasting every stitch on the advancing row, and on the return row working the upper part of each stitch into the lower space of the row above, thus leaving no strands between the stitches or rows.

Vandyke Border, Fig. G.—This pointed pattern, worked in a single row, makes a good finish for a border or hem.

To work as Fig. G, each group requires seven stitches to form it, the shortest covering four threads and the longest twelve ; the last stitch of each group forms the first of the next one.

Pyramid Filling.—The size of the groups may vary ; large and small vandykes may alternate. Another filling somewhat similar may be made by taking the stitches horizontally instead of vertically ; in this way groups of little pyramids are formed. Each row should be worked with alternating pyramids. The simplest method is to begin at the top with a short stitch over

Darning Stitches

two threads, work five more horizontal stitches, increasing in width, right and left, by one thread, so that the sixth stitch covers twelve threads of the material. Work in oblique rows.

Strips of vandyke pattern may be worked over large backgrounds with good effect. Make five horizontal stitches over five strands of canvas, each stitch being below the other, but one thread to the right of the last; then work four stitches beneath these, each stitch being this time one thread to the left of the one above it; continue for length required. Start the second row on a level with the first and six or seven strands to the right of it.

Fig. B, Arrow-head Filling.—This is a useful stitch for covering the ground quickly. The three stitches are here formed over six vertical and ten horizontal threads, but, of course, the number must always depend upon the quality of the material. The vertical stitch is worked first, then the left slanting stitch, followed by the right. In working with loosely woven cloth, it is necessary to carry the working thread up behind the material to the top to start each stitch. This uses rather more thread, but the stitches lie better and the work is not puckered.

Fig. F, Star Filling.—Here, a number of stars are worked in successive rows. To make them quite regular, each one should be begun at the same point. In the Fig. F they are worked over sixteen strands: start at the top left corner with a double stitch, then make the horizontal stitch below, and so on till complete. By tightening the working thread a little a hole is formed

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at each corner, and in the centre of each star, which makes the pattern an open one, provided the working thread is not too thick, in which case it would fill up the hole.

An equally good background for a firmer material is to work stars in two rows, diagonally, one up, one down, leaving always an equal number of strands between each star. In this way the material itself is formed into little diamond-shaped panels or lozenges.

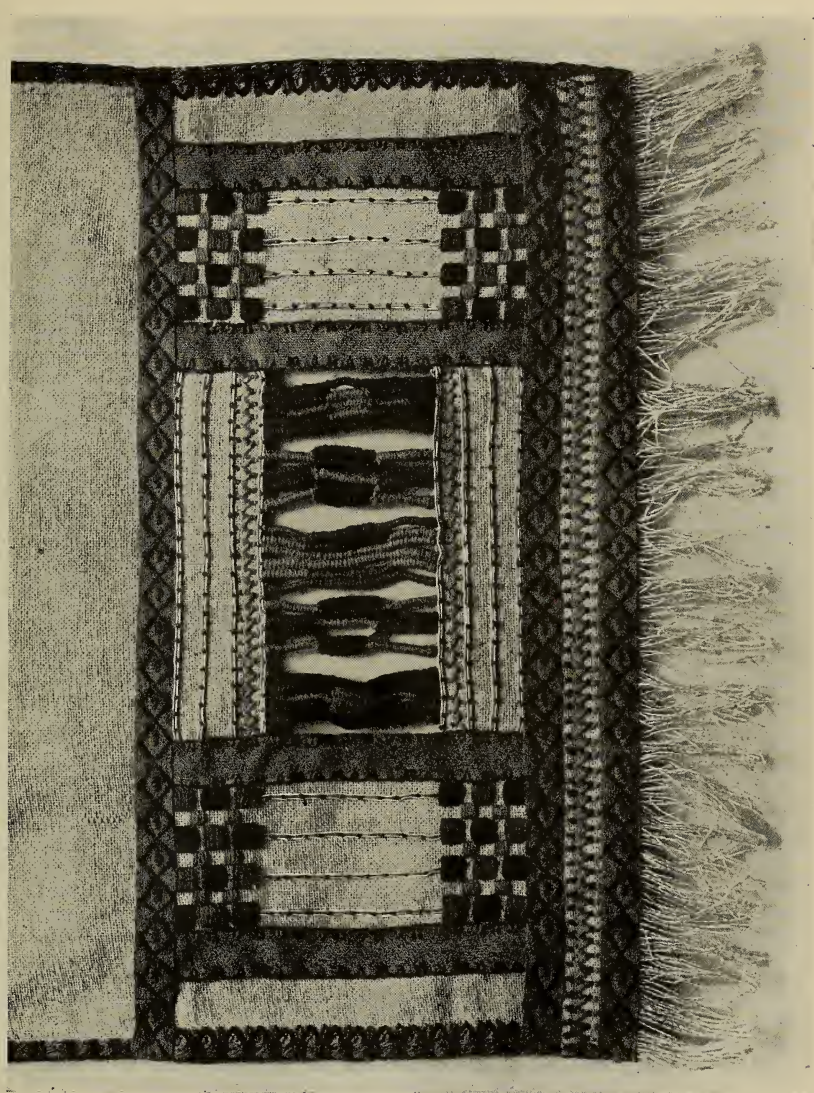
Fig. C, Wave Pattern.—This is one of the more elaborate darning patterns. It makes a more solid filling and takes rather longer to work than some of the others. Many pleasing variations may be formed with darning stitches, where the background weft or warp threads are utilised to form the pattern.

Damask Darning.—Materials may be repaired by a linen, twill, or damask darn, in which case the weft threads have to be put in first by the worker before the pattern can be woven.

Work Fig. C by lifting two weft threads in descending rows and passing over seven; after working six rows the pattern is changed by the two weft threads being lifted in ascending rows, the last of the descending counting as the first of the ascending row.

In a twill darn, the pattern of weft threads descends all the time in regular diagonal lines.

It is quite worth while copying some of these damask patterns from table napery, and reproducing them on a larger scale in bright colours—in order to see what effective designs they are; they might well be utilised, as fillings for squares, stools, or cushions.



A RUNNER IN CRASH (See p. 63)

Darning Stitches

Fig. A, Single Darning.—A simple grounding pattern, such as that of Fig. A, is useful ; it is quickly worked, too, a number of threads being lifted by the needle at each stitch. Start at the left corner ; pass over four and lift two weft threads alternately for the first two rows ; for the next two rows, lift the two weft threads in a line with the centre of the long stitch, and so on.

Basket Pattern.—A basket or brick pattern may be got by working four rows with the lifted threads in a line, instead of two, as Fig. A, before changing the stitch. This pattern looks very well when the chequers are worked with contrasting colours. Work four vertical stitches first, in lines, and in one colour, over eight strands ; then take the contrasting colour and fill in all the horizontal stitches. If one colour only is used these squares may be worked in rows, the vertical and horizontal sections alternately.

Fig. H.—This type of work makes a rather more open background than some of the others ; it is very suitable for filling in small spaces, for handkerchief sachets, nightdress bags or borders for collars or handkerchiefs.

It should be worked with a fine coloured or white lace thread, sufficiently strong to draw the strands firmly together, yet fine enough to leave the spaces as clear as possible. As a filling it is easily and quickly worked, as no threads are drawn out, which is a recommendation.

The pattern is worked over six threads both ways—with the exception of the first stitch—and in two horizontal lines. It will be noted that the stitches are not

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quite vertical, being inclined towards each other in twos.

A Good Filling.—To form the first stitches, bring the needle out at the top left corner ; count down over six strands and three to the right ; insert the needle and take a horizontal stitch under six strands to the right. The slanting stitch is now formed by inserting the needle into the hole on the upper line made by the first stitch, and taking a horizontal stitch under six strands to the right on that line—the upper one ; proceed in this way to the end of the space. The next row is worked from right to left. The thread should be tightened after each stitch to increase the open space.

Fig. D, Diagonal Filling.—This grounding pattern consists of rows of slanting stitches, worked downwards over six strands of material ; the working thread is taken across from corner to corner of a square, each successive stitch being taken three strands below the upper one ; a strand of the material forms a mid-rib between the inverted rows. If preferred, these rows might be separated by a line of backstitching, in which case two threads should divide each row of slanting stitches ; this gives a clear line for the backstitching.

These backgrounds and darning stitches described above are well suited for working on coarse materials with thick threads—as well as with finer ones ; although the patterns for the majority of workers are too laborious for very fine stuffs, they may be used for small spaces in linen embroidery such as fillings for flowers, or initials.

Charming open groundings may be worked without removing the threads of the foundation material, but by

Backgrounds and Fillings

drawing them in clusters tightly together, by means of stitches. Compare Plate II., where the fillings, Figs. H, I, B, K, L, and M, are worked in this way.

These patterns can be only shown properly on a loosely woven cloth, such as canvas, linen, or cambric. For fine material a fine lace thread is required.

Fig. I.—This pattern consists of little squares and crosses. In Fig. I it has been worked with a thick thread and the strands have not been pulled together—in order to show the method of working; but as already explained, it requires a fine thread and tightened strands to show to advantage.

A Filling in Squares.—Begin the pattern with vertical stitches, in horizontal rows over six strands, exactly as in Fig. 10, until the required space is filled, drawing each group of threads tightly together; then work the horizontal stitches over five strands to complete the squares, tightening them also, but not to such an extent as to pucker the material. The squares may be made smaller and the open spaces larger if each stitch is worked over twice with a very fine thread.

Fig. K, Squares and Stars.—Here, each square takes up sixteen strands of linen, and each one is completed before going on to the next. Work by over-casting all round the outside of the square over four strands, and make an inner square, as Fig. I, with a cross stitch in the centre, taking care to finish with the needle in a position to begin the next square.

Fig. L, Square Stitch and Rhodian Embroidery.—This pattern is made up of rows of square stitches separated by vertical ones. It is usually

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worked without removing any threads from the material, although with a very firm cloth it is rather an advantage to do so when an insertion is wanted; in the latter case the vertical threads connecting the rows of square stitch are left out.

This is a stitch one frequently finds in old linen embroideries, particularly of old German and Italian work—where it is used either as a border or insertion, or as a separating line between squared or diamond-shaped forms; there is a similarity in the working of it to the stitches used by the people of the Island of Rhodes—latterly known as Rhodes embroidery or punch work—the only difference being that it covers the entire background in Rhodian embroideries and the threads are more closely drawn together. In these Rhodian embroideries the rose is frequently to be met with. It is the symbol which invariably accompanies the head of Helios on its coins, and to which the classic isle owes its name. Square stitch can be worked in straight or in slanting lines, see Fig. M—the former is the simpler, as each square is completed in one row, while the latter requires two rows to complete it.

To work on horizontal lines, Fig. L, begin at the right-hand side and make an upright stitch over six threads; take a slanting stitch at the back and bring the needle out six threads to the left at the base. Take a horizontal stitch to the right, inserting the needle at the foot of the vertical stitch; take an upwards slanting stitch at the back to the left and insert the needle into the top of the first stitch. This forms three sides of the

A Table Scarf

square. Now bring the needle out in position to start as for the first upright stitch. If properly worked, the reverse side forms a series of crosses. Fig. L has a row of these square stitches with an alternate row of upright stitches worked from left to right between them. This is a pretty and unusual combination of stitches, and it makes a charming border worked in colour on a loosely textured material for a collar or other small article. Another variation of the same type, and still more open, is to have double rows of square stitch between each row of vertical stitches, the lower row of little squares coming between those of the upper row.

Fig. I, Square Stitch in Slanting Lines.—To work this stitch in slanting lines is rather a slower process. The first row forms a series of zig-zags or little steps on the right side, while on the wrong side it forms two single lines on the bias of the material. Begin at the right-hand side of the work; take a horizontal stitch from left to right over six threads; a slanting stitch at the back to the left brings the needle out six threads below the starting-point. Take an upright stitch and put the needle into this point—two sides of the square are now formed. Take a slanting stitch at the back and bring the needle out six threads to the left of the base of the upright stitch and continue for the distance required. This slanting line of square stitch is easily acquired if the worker remembers the appearance of the stitch, on the “wrong” side as well as the right.

A Table Scarf in Russian Crash.—This design is another of the direct type in which the needle-woven border forms the principal subject. The material is very

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pleasant to work—it is of a soft greyish-cream colour, which combines well with the wools and braids, and the texture is sufficiently open to allow of the threads being easily removed, which is a recommendation when preparing for the needle-weaving and the fringe. The stitchery is all done in wools, and the colours are dark heliotrope with two lighter tints, blues (two tones), greens, a dark and light emerald, and deep orange. The broad braid is of soft blue, the narrow of straw colour. The design forms a deep border divided into panels by bands of braid; the bands are tacked into place by short button-hole stitches in the darker shade of emerald green, between which are tiny little loop stitches (Fig. 3), in orange. The centre panel has a wide band of needle-weaving, about three inches deep, which is divided up into five groups; the groups are worked from the outside, inwards, as in Plate I., and the various colours are introduced into them. The most prominent colour in the scheme is blue, accentuated in this case by the blue braid, the blue edging, and the second and fourth groups of weaving, which are worked in two shades of blue. The first and fifth groups are woven in heliotrope with orange in the centre; the middle group has light heliotrope on the outer parts and pale green on the inner. This same green is worked in oriental stitch on each side of the central 3-inch bar, while the stitchery between the rows of wide blue braid is in the lightest tint of heliotrope, tacked down with tiny stitches of the darkest shade. The two side panels are worked in satin stitch in two tones of heliotrope, each row of chequers being connected by small chequers in light green—they also are

A Table Scarf

worked in satin stitch. The lines of straw-coloured braid are sewn down with French knots in heliotrope (Figs. 22A, 22B). The pattern of the stitching on the bands of braid which border the design is worked in the same way as loop or oriental stitch ; the needle is brought out on one side of the braid and inserted on the other side, just opposite, then brought out again in the centre to the right, where the wool is tacked down with a tiny stitch ; the needle is again brought out on the edge of the braid, about half an inch further on, inserted on the lower edge and brought out in the middle again in order to tack the wool down. These two stitches reversed give the diamond shape of the insertion ; three satin stitches in orange give a bright little note to the edging. These looped or petal stitches worked in different ways can be used to form many pretty headings. The narrow edging on the selvages between the lines of blue braid is charming ; it consists of two loops of heliotrope in two shades—the one worked within the other—with a closed looped stitch in orange between each pair. When all the embroidery is finished, the weft threads are withdrawn from the remaining ends of the material, which have been left for the fringe. Sometimes a fringe of a closer texture or of a different type is worked, or the material may be too short to allow of one—in all of which cases a strip of cloth could be inserted under the braid and sewn down with the pattern, then fringed.

It is generally advisable when working with narrow braids to take the ends through the material where they can be stitched firmly in place ; wider ones are often tied at the ends to prevent spreading, then turned in and stitched.

CHAPTER V

NEEDLE-WEAVING—RUSSIAN OPEN-WORK— LINKED STITCHES

“ A web made fair in the weaving.”

NEEDLE-WEAVING is a form of decoration common to all countries ; it was practised by primitive peoples and must have preceded embroidery. It was a means of adding richness and colour much in favour with the early Egyptians, who decorated their garments with fringes and bands of needle-weaving. Mummy cloths treated in this way are to be seen in the British Museum ; also specimens of early Coptic work, preserved in the Victoria and Albert Museum, show that they were in the habit of weaving little panels and borders with the needle, with which to decorate their garments. This desire to enrich and decorate with the needle, by means of colour and pattern, the more important parts of their apparel followed on the discovery of how to weave cloth, and so we find that these early workers frequently left out the weft threads and wove in beautiful patterns, rich in colour, with the needle into these spaces. Later, little panels, bars and medallions were worked in this way and inserted into their garments. This needle-weaving, which is practically tapestry with the needle, seems to have reached a great degree of perfection in the

Needle-Weaving

fifth century. There is very little to distinguish needle-weaving from tapestry, except that the latter is done with the shuttle instead of the needle.

This weaving of patterns directly on to the material is fascinating work. It is so effective, so rich in result, and so charmingly appropriate to the material; there must always be a certain stiffness and rigidity in the pattern, caused by the upright warp threads, which demand simplicity of treatment. Weaving, whether done with needle, bobbins or shuttle, is just a method of interweaving the warp threads with the weft; these weft-threads may consist of wools, silks, cottons, or—decoratively, of raffia, or even gold and silver threads.

This type of work may be applied to all kinds of useful household articles—table linen, bed linen, cushions, bags, chair backs, footstools, book covers; also bands and insertions for garments. There is room for such simple pattern, combined in some cases with other stitchery, on these and many other articles, where a marginal decoration is appropriate.

Description of Frontispiece.—Plate I. shows a table square worked on “Titian” canvas of a soft brown tint. The original was 36 inches by 18 inches. The edges of the canvas should be turned up and the spaces arranged for the needle-weaving and coloured bands before the weft threads are removed. Allow about 3 inches for the open-work. Cut the weft threads and pull them out. Fig. 31 shows method of working; begin at the right-hand corner and weave the pattern over six groups, three strands in each group—these are worked in gold and yellow; repeat the same pattern on

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the opposite side—it simplifies the work and saves time and trouble if the weaving is done from the ends, working inwards ; thus two similar patterns are woven, one after the other. If the band of weaving is carefully examined, it will be seen that the gold-coloured threads form a definite pattern on the background ; if these are woven in first, it will aid the worker and act as a guide for the interlacing of the other colours. The next group, in lemon and purple, is worked on nine groups of threads : throughout all these patterns a group consists of three strands. The purple lines are sewn in with a back stitch. The third group is formed of a large cross in orange surrounded with gold-coloured squares, which in turn are completed with blue squares at the corners.

The fourth, or central group, has two narrow bars on each side, worked in soft green, blue, purple and gold.

The inner cross of lemon wool with purple and gold can be easily followed from the plate.

The broad band of needle-weaving is edged by rows of variegated chain stitch in brown and cream (for the working of which, see Fig. 1, p. 46), and followed by rows of button-hole in orange (Fig. 11).

The wide braid-like line in oriental stitch, along the top, is worked very closely ; along the sides the same stitch is seen with wider spacing. This stitch is of the herring-bone type—the needle is inserted vertically, instead of horizontally, as in the case of the commoner and better-known stitch. It is effective and economical, as the bulk of the thread is on the surface.

The tassels are of soft brown and bright blue wool hung on to button-holed loops, for the making of which,

Needle-Weaving

see Fig. 57, Chapter XIII. ; and for the tassels, Fig. 41. The ribbon border is worked in gold and purple silk.

A sideboard runner worked similarly, but with two wide bands of needle-weaving at each end and rather wider lines of stitchery at the sides, was made to match this table runner ; the light colours of the border gave a very gay touch to an otherwise sombre room.

Plate II., Fig. N, illustrates another type of open-work which is practised by the peasantry of Russia. It is interesting and quite different in appearance from some of the other peasant work. One distinguishing feature is that two rows are worked in conjunction, and another is the number of rows and the manner in which they are worked. This form of open-work deserves to be better known in this country. The pattern is formed by means of blocks of stitches, which are not worked in the ordinary darning or weaving stitch but by the overcasting of laid threads ; indeed, with the exception of the first and final rows—which are hemstitched—the entire work consists of the overcasting of threads ; bars, strands or groups, all are worked from right to left. The Russian peasantry work most elaborate borders on handsome linen of an open texture ; these borders vary in width from 2 inches to 18 inches, and are applied to all kinds of articles for household and personal use. This form of open-work is more durable than the type usually done in this country ; indeed, the material is strengthened by the stitchery rather than weakened, as is frequently the case with the usual method of treating drawn-thread work.

To work a border similar to Plate II., Fig. N,

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begin by removing two threads; work a row of single hemstitch into the space, over four threads, dividing the material into clusters with six warp threads in each—the hemstitching is done from left to right in the usual way. To prepare for the next two rows, leave a narrow bar of five weft threads and draw out six threads—the number of threads to be removed will, of course, vary according to the quality of the material, but the horizontal intervening bars are always narrower than the open spaces. Begin at the right hand; make the number of upright stitches necessary to carry the thread to the left of the group, which is to be worked into a solid block; lay the thread across this group, and returning, bring the needle out between the first and second cluster of threads, on the right of the cluster; now put the needle over the laid thread and bring it out under the laid thread at the next group. Put the needle over the thread again and bring it out at the left of the entire group; in other words, overcast the laid thread from right to left of the group—always pass the needle behind a cluster of threads between each overcasting stitch; continue to lay the thread and overcast back until the space is filled, then work one straight stitch over the upper horizontal bar; overcast one vertical cluster; slip the carrying thread up behind; work another upright stitch; overcast the second vertical cluster; again slip the thread up through the back of the stitchery; then work the upright stitches and repeat the laying and overcasting to make the solid pattern again. Once the method is acquired, it will be a simple matter to arrange these solid masses in such a way as to form a pattern.

Needle-Weaving

It is better to prepare and cut the threads of each row just before working it ; there is, in this way, less risk of making mistakes by cutting the wrong threads. Another reason for preparing the rows step by step is that the material is easier to hold before the removal of the weft threads than it would be after they have been withdrawn.

LINKED STITCHES.

Chain and Tambour Work (Fig. 1).—Chain stitch, which is said to have come to us from China, has been for a long time little used in this country. Tambour stitch—in high favour and greatly used by our grandmothers—was produced later by the machine in such quantities and in so mechanical and inartistic a manner that it fell into disfavour, and unfortunately chain stitch—which is practically the same, except that it is worked with the needle instead of with a crochet hook—fell with it. Nevertheless, it is a stitch which is most useful and charming in its even and somewhat monotonous regularity, especially where a great variety of colour is used and a broad effect is wanted. A particularly adaptable stitch, it lends itself, on account of its linked nature, to the following of curves and spirals, outlines and the filling of circular and oval forms. It can be worked singly—as a powdering—or in a zig-zag pattern—with two colours at once—which produces an interesting result (Plate I.), or with a twist. Worked openly with the needle inserted first to the left then to the right to give a broader line, it is known as ladder stitch, while twisted chain, worked closely, is known as rope

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stitch. Linked chain and cable chain (Fig. 8) are more elaborate forms of the same stitch. Much of the beautiful Persian quilting done on linens is worked in chain stitch on the wrong side, which gives the "quilting," or back stitch, on the right side.

The Working of Tambour Stitch.—Tambour stitch, though of little use for small work, might still be employed very effectively as a quilting stitch, and for large pieces of work, such as table covers or hangings; it is worked on a frame, and one can quickly acquire facility with the hook and accuracy in the working of it.

Method :—The material is put in a frame; the thread is kept underneath, where the left hand guides it; a sharp-pointed hook is kept in the right hand and passed through the material from the surface; it catches the thread from the under side and bring it up in a loop; the hook is inserted again and the thread is again brought up in a loop through the preceding loop.

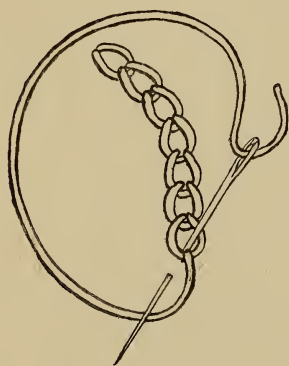


FIG. 1.

To Work Chain Stitch (Fig. 1).—To work chain stitch, bring the thread out at the beginning of the line; hold it down with the left thumb; place the needle into the hole, which the thread already occupies, and take up a small piece of the material—

this will vary from one-sixteenth to one-eighth of an inch according to the thread and material; draw the thread

Linked Stitches

through, and the first link of the chain is complete ; insert the needle again at the spot where the thread comes out and proceed as before. A cord-like effect may be got by overcasting each link of the chain with another colour : the eye of the needle should be used, as the overcast stitch is taken over the links only.

Chain Stitch in Two Colours.—A variation to a border may be given by working alternate links of different colour.

Method :—Take two threads in the needle, a black and a white, or a blue and a green, or any two contrasting colours ; bring the needle out at the starting point ; hold the black thread, which should be to the left, under the thumb—the white thread is placed aside out of the way ; insert the needle, as for chain stitch, beside the held thread and draw through—a chain stitch of black has been formed. Next, hold the white thread under the thumb, and form the white link, the black thread being placed aside to the right this time. Work in this way alternate black and white links ; a little manipulation is sometimes required to keep the thread not in use out of sight (Plate I.).

Split Stitch.—Split stitch may be used for very fine work, or for fixing down laid stitches, for which it is particularly suitable ; it has the appearance of a fine chain stitch, but is in reality a single stitch which is split, in the process of working, by the needle. Up to the fourteenth century, it was generally used in figure embroidery to express form, folds of drapery, and features, and was a stitch well adapted for the purpose ; but as figure embroidery is quite beyond the scope of

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this book and the simpler pieces of embroidery it advocates, it is sufficient perhaps to explain the method of working, rather than go into the particulars of its history. It is worked from left to right.

Method :—Bring the thread to the surface at the left ; take a stitch, one-sixteenth of an inch, to the right with the point of the needle towards the left ; pierce the thread which covers this space and draw the needle through it, splitting the thread and forming a link-like stitch.

Coral Stitch (Fig. 2).—Coral stitch is a good decorative line stitch, easily and quickly executed. It is known under several names, such as snail-trail and knotted stitch, etc. It is composed of single knots, worked with the connecting thread on the surface ; sometimes the knots are worked so closely together as to have the appearance of beads, or they may be worked half an inch apart, and in rows, when they make good lines for filling large spaces or borders.

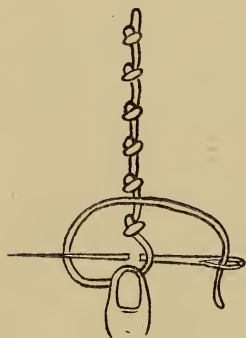


FIG. 2.

Method of working :—Bring the thread through to the front ; place the left thumb on it, beyond the point where the knot is to be made ; take a stitch under the held thread and at right angles to it ; draw the needle through, still holding the thread under the thumb, and tighten. This stitch is suitable for working with wools on fine material.

Petal or Loop Stitch (Fig. 3).—Another useful stitch is shown in Fig. 3. It is invaluable for the making



A PORTIERE.

Linked Stitches

of small flowers and borders, for picking out edges, and for emphasising lines (Plates IV., XIII.). The working of a small flower is shown in Figs. 3 and 3A.

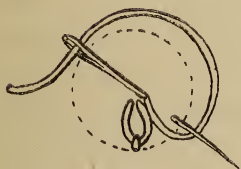


FIG. 3.

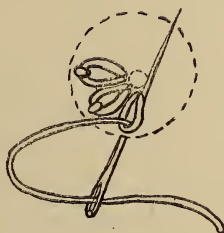


FIG. 3A.



FIG. 3B.

Method :—Bring the needle out in the centre of the space; insert it again at the same point; bring it out near the tip of the petal, as in Fig. 3A, and tack it down with a small stitch.

Larger flowers can be quite artistically worked by beginning with a small stitch at the foot of the petal, and increasing by successive stitches until the outline is reached (Fig. 3B). The outer stitch can be worked in a different colour or tone with pleasing effect. One of the large conventional flowers in Plate XI. has an outline of these stitches, while another has the inner circle worked in the same way (Plate IV.).

Feather Stitch (Fig. 4).—One of the feather stitches, all of which are composed of button-hole stitches, is illustrated in Fig. 4. It is worked vertically, a stitch being made alternately from left to right. The width of the stitch may vary, but it



FIG. 4.

E.B.

E

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must be regularly worked and uniform in size, to look well, when it presents a braid-like appearance which is most ornamental for underlinen and other purposes. The diagram explains the method of working.

Fish-bone Stitch (Fig. 5).—Fish-bone stitch is another of the feather or button-hole type. There are so many variations of those stitches, which are well known to most needlewomen—having been used for the decoration of underlinen for the last generation or two—that only a few need be mentioned here.



FIG. 5.

Quite a pretty and uncommon variety (Fig. 5) is useful for the filling of leaf forms, as well as for borders. The stitch appears to be made up of two long outer and two short inner ones, but as will be seen by looking carefully at the diagram, there are only two movements. It is worked just as in Fig. 4, from left to right. It is very easily worked on loosely-woven material, but where the texture is close, it is simpler and safer to mark four lines on the material for guidance, two outer and two inner, the latter closer together.

To work Fig. 5.—Begin to work from one of the central lines—the one to the right; insert the needle on the left outer line and bring it out on the left inner line, keeping the working thread under the needle; continue in this way, working vertically and keeping the stitches regular and equally spaced. The outside stitches may be made still longer and closer than those in the diagram

Linked Stitches

with good effects, particularly when used for a filling for petals and leaves.

Cretan Stitch.—A still more pleasing variety, known as Cretan stitch and frequently seen on Cretan or Eastern embroideries, is worked similarly in horizontal lines, but the outer and longer stitches are small, straight and closely worked together, so that it makes an excellent solid border stitch, which looks very handsome when worked in metal threads.

To work Cretan or Oriental Stitch.—Draw four lines on the material; start as in Fig. 5, on the right inner line; insert the needle on the left outer line, and bring it out on the left inner one with the thread under the needle; take a stitch on the right outer line; bring it out on the left inner line with the thread under the needle; continue alternately from left to right, taking care to keep the stitches exactly below each other. The appearance of the line can be slightly varied by increasing or decreasing the outer stitches. The inner plaiting is regulated by the size of the stitches taken on the outer edges. See Plate I., where the solid blue line enclosed within the chequered chain-stitched lines is worked in this way. The lines on either side of the runner show the stitch worked more openly.

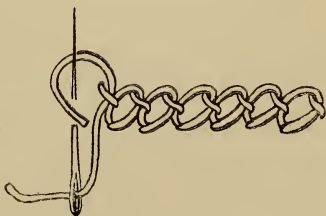


FIG. 6.

Link Stitch (Fig. 6).—This is rather an unusual stitch, being formed of links connected by short stitches. To be effective, it should be worked with thick twisted

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thread. It is easily done on a ground where the warp and weft threads are sufficiently open to guide the worker, otherwise two lines parallel should be marked from a quarter to half an inch apart.

To work Link Stitch (Fig. 6a).—

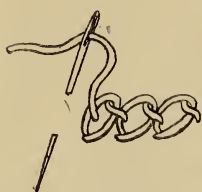


FIG. 6A.

Begin with the smaller stitches (Fig. 6A); bring the needle out in the middle of the space to be covered; insert on the upper edge to the left, and bring out still further to the left on the lower edge. Pass the eye of the needle down through the small stitch and insert again on the lower edge slightly to the left of the previous one; take a vertical stitch upwards and a little beyond the centre, having the thread under the needle as in Fig. 6; pull the needle through. These three movements complete the stitch, the thread being now in position to make the first small stitch again. This stitch is called linked, or knotted chain.

To work Tête de Bœuf (Fig. 7).—

Another variation of the loop or petal stitch is called Tête de Bœuf. Work a loop stitch as Fig. 7A, then take a stitch across from left to right; bring the needle out above the stretched thread. Make another loop stitch, which fixes this in place. This stitch is often used as a powdering. It makes a good border stitch.



FIG. 7. FIG. 7A.

To work Cable Chain (Fig. 8).—Cable chain can be worked in two ways. Two guiding lines will be of

Linked Stitches

assistance. Bring the needle out at the starting point in the middle of the space ; form a small loop by throwing the thread round as Fig. 8 ; insert the needle in the centre of this loop, which will vary in size according to the thickness of the thread and the size of the cable wanted ; bring it out about a quarter of an inch lower down, taking care to keep the thread under the point of the needle ; tighten the small loop to the proper size with the right hand, then, placing the thumb on the stitch, pull the thread through. This forms both the small and large link and the thread is in position to start again. When worked in a firmly twisted thread, such as Knox's linen "cord" floss thread, it makes a pretty border or line stitch. A row of couching makes a good edging and emphasises the line if required.

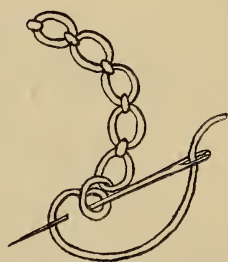


FIG. 8.

By the second method, the small stitch is made first, and the needle brought out to the surface about a quarter of an inch lower down ; put the needle through the small stitch from left to right and place the thumb on it ; put the needle through the large loop in process of making from right to left and tighten the thread sufficiently. The small stitch has now to be made.

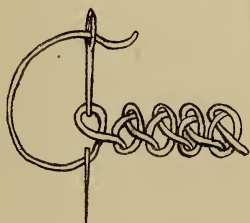


FIG. 9.

Braid Stitch (Fig. 9).—When a fairly heavy line is necessary, Fig. 9 can be used. It has a

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braid-like appearance, and for that reason is generally known as braid stitch. Work from right to left and



FIG. 9A.

start on the lower edge. Bring the thread out and place the thumb on it, and twist the needle round the held thread, so forming a loose twist on it (Fig. 9A). Then insert the needle in the upper line, a little to the left of the starting point; bring it out on the lower

line, exactly beneath; place the thread under the needle, and draw through, keeping the thumb on the stitch till tightened sufficiently to form the link.

CHAPTER VI

BUTTON-HOLE AND BORDER STITCHES—HEMSTITCHING AND OPEN FILLINGS

“ And she that is wise, her time will pris.”

Part of a Curtain.—This illustration (Plate IV.) gives a part of a curtain, which is a fine piece of work. The design has been well considered. The simple masses are admirably juxtaposed; they have been skilfully arranged in a manner singularly appropriate to the work. As a piece of embroidery that would generally be looked at from some distance there has been no time spent on minute detail which would involve unnecessary labour. The bold, yet dainty treatment of the needle-work is first-rate, and the whole arrangement of the design, colour and stitchery show that the purpose for which the embroidery was meant must have been continually in the mind of the worker.

The circular massed forms in rich reddish-orange are set, most successfully, the one against the other; the green masses, so simple in shape and satisfactory in colour, are clearly silhouetted against the dark background; the white oblongs with the little orange circles, the applied hem and bands in vivid blue, the interesting variation in stitchery, all go to make a charmingly harmonious piece of simple decoration. Work of this type can be made from materials which are quite in-

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expensive, and its value on that account is increased tenfold. In the illustration, the various parts of the design, colour and stitchery are so clearly brought out that a detailed description is not required. The background is of linen of a firm quality; the applied forms may be of linen or of any firm material in wool or cotton; the embroidery is in wools, cottons and silks. For the method of working the button-hole filling, see Fig. 11. The large circular forms are fixed to the foundation with a row of chain stitch; the little orange circles on the white ground are in the same stitch (Fig. 1). The blue bands are applied with darning or tacking stitch outlined with coral stitch (Fig. 2), the hem with button-hole stitch. The effective little groups of white on the green ground are in petal stitch (Fig. 3). All the little square blocks are in satin stitch. How interesting this constructional design can become to the needlewoman who uses her powers of mind and brain, and who applies her ideas to decorate all manner of things. She would no longer be content to work detached sprays of flowers and leaves, strewn promiscuously over her work, once she discovered what good patterns she could make with simple shapes and with the aid of small pieces of bright-coloured patches and short lengths of material, which she might adapt and use for many purposes.

Various Button-hole Stitches.—Button-hole stitch is one of the most useful of stitches, owing to its construction and adaptability, and the decision with which it marks a line. It can be used equally well for plain needlework, embroidery, or needle-point lace; for borders or fillings, either open or solid, for the

Button-hole and Border Stitches

covering of raw edges, the outlining of *appliqué* forms, or the working of flowers or leaves. The direction, spacing and grouping of the stitch may be arranged to suit the work and curved lines may be followed with the utmost facility.

Indeed, the interesting variations and combinations which may be obtained by an ingenious worker are endless.

There are two ways of working the stitch, single button-hole (Fig. 10A), and double or tailor's button-hole; the former, when worked with rather a wide space between each stitch, is generally known as blanket stitch. Fig. 10A gives a corner for a border, which will also make a suitable finish or heading to the neck of a dress or blouse; it may be spaced in various ways, worked in slanting lines, or with stitches of equal lengths, worked over threads or narrow braids of a different colour or tone. When the heading forms a close line, it is usually considered as a button-hole stitch. Plate I. shows two lines of button-holing worked in groups of three, in orange wool, between two rows of chequered chain stitch, where they serve to connect the broad bands of orange which surround the border of the runner.

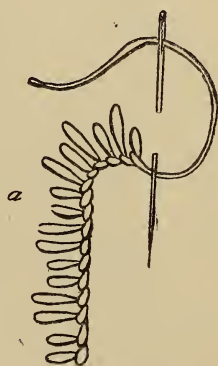


FIG. 10A.

For the making of an actual button-hole, or where a firmer and more decorative heading is wanted, it is better to use the variety known as tailor's button-hole,

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which has an extra knot added to it; it is this knot which gives greater firmness as well as beauty to the stitch.

To work Blanket Stitch (Fig. 10a).—Blanket, or single button-hole stitch, is so well known that it is hardly necessary to describe it. Bring the needle out at the left end of the line or border; place the thread under the left thumb and insert the needle as shown in Fig. 10A; draw it through, still keeping the thumb on the thread—the needle is thus brought out over it.

Tailor's Button Stitch.—Tailor's button-hole—the method of working:—Put the needle into the same position, with the thread under it, as for the single stitch, then take the thread, near the eye of the needle, in the right hand and pass it from right to left again under the needle; draw the needle through both loops and the stitch is complete.

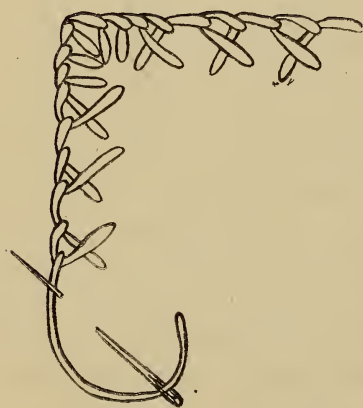


FIG. 10.

Crossed Button-hole (Fig. 10).—Fig. 10 shows another variety of the stitch. The threads are crossed by sloping the needle to the right for the one, and to the left for the other. When worked on a loosely-woven material they can easily be kept exact.

The knotted edge may be further strengthened by a row of chain stitch, which always improves the line. As may be seen from the

Button-hole and Border Stitches

figure, either the under or upper stitches may be the longer, but they should not be varied on the same border, otherwise the regularity of the work will be impaired.

Flowers in Button-hole Stitch (Plate XIII.).—

Fig. 11 may be used for a solid or open groundstitch ; it makes a charming filling when worked over the material for the petals of large flowers, each petal being outlined with chain stitch, couching, or back stitching (Plate XI.). When working over a foundation, the first row and the last only are fixed to the material ; the intervening rows are worked into the headings or loops of the preceding rows. When the spaces to be filled with stitchery of this type are not of such a form as to allow of working continuously, each row of stitchery must be attached to the material at the sides, to keep it in position ; the rows are then worked to and fro from right to left, or *vice versa*.

“ A Portière ” (Plate IV.).—In this piece of work an excellent example of this method of filling is seen ; the groups of five stitches worked in lemon wool, on a black linen background, make a bright chequered effect, which adds both interest and distinction to the design.

Button-hole Filling of a

Space (Fig. 11).—Fig. 11 shows clearly the method of filling an open space in this way. The edges must be button-holed in the manner described for white work, unless a braid is used, when

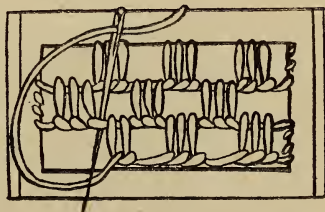


FIG. 11.

An Embroidery Book

the firm edge which it gives is sufficient without extra stitching. Begin at the right upper corner ; make three small overcast stitches to carry the thread into position for working the first row, which consists of groups of three button-hole stitches worked loosely into the edges of the braid or material ; at the end of the row fasten the thread to the braid ; again overcast three stitches ; work the second row of button-hole into the loops or spaces of the previous row ; continue in this way until the space is filled ; the last row should be worked into the braid, in order to keep the others in position.

Plate X. has the central portion enriched by a filling worked in button-hole in blue flax thread. It is commenced from the centre ; the lines of the pattern are then followed towards the outer edges (see description on p. 112). Plate XI. shows a similar filling, in the flower at the corner, which is also worked in colour and finished on the inner row of button-holing by a line of back stitch.

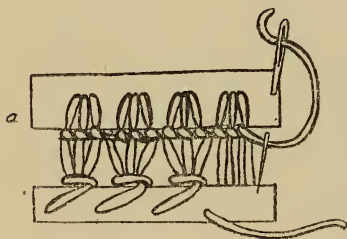


FIG. 12A.

A Diapered Border (Fig. 12a).—Quite an interesting solid diapered background may be obtained by working these

stitches in rows, in groups of three or five. The clusters are worked closely at the top ; the second row has the apex of each cluster fitting into the base of the preceding one. A very pleasing border in contrasting colours may be obtained in this way ; the

Button-hole and Border Stitches

two firm lines of button-holing will, of course, form the outer edges.

Double Button-hole (Fig. 12b).—Double button-holing has two rows of button stitch (Fig. 12B). The first must have the stitches spaced so as to allow of the second row of stitches dovetailing into those of the first. This variety can be applied very successfully to braid or galloons, in which cases the stitches need not reach to the opposite side as in Fig. 12B.



FIG. 12B.

Leaves in Button-hole Stitch.—A very good method of filling leaves is to work them in two rows of button-holing, back to back, the firm central line forming the mid-rib of the leaf and the rather broken outer line suggesting the serration of the edges. Small flowers, flower centres and berries are frequently worked in this way (Plate XIII.). The heading of the stitch forms the outline. An old-fashioned, but quaint variety of ground-filling to be seen on some of the earlier samples consisted of successive rows of these little eyelet stitches. The material was first pierced by a stiletto at regular intervals; each hole was then button-holed or overcast round. The insertion of the needle into a common centre formed an opening which gave a lighter effect to the background.



FIG. 13.

Decorative Back Stitch (Fig. 13).—This figure is simply back stitch. To be effective and to make room for the interlacing thread,

An Embroidery Book

it should be worked rather larger than usual, and with a thicker thread, from one-eighth to a quarter of an inch in length. A thread of a contrasting tone is then laced through, eye of the needle foremost, the loops of each stitch being regulated before passing on to the next. Back stitch was greatly in use in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, for the adornment of all sorts of articles. Quilts, hangings, and personal clothing were ornamented in this way with bands and patterns. These were sometimes produced by chain stitch worked on the wrong side of the material, which, as an embroideress knows, forms a row of back stitching on the reverse side—the right side in this case.

Reversible Back Stitch.—Sometimes these patterns were worked in reversible back stitch, in order to make both sides of the stitching alike, for in those days needleworkers did not grudge either the time or the patience spent on their embroideries.

Reversible back stitch, so-called, is a running or darning stitch. All should be regular and equal in length, or the appearance of the work, when finished, will not resemble back stitch. The “back” stitch is formed by going over the line a second time with a running stitch, which fills up the spaces on both sides of the material and renders it reversible.

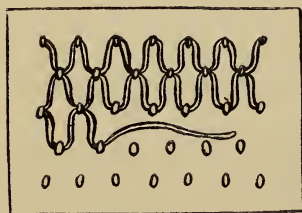


FIG. 14.

Honeycomb Filling (Fig. 14).—This pattern has an advantage over some of the more elaborate background stitches ; it is easily and

Button-hole and Border Stitches

quickly worked, and most of the thread is on the surface. It is known to some needlewomen as honeycomb stitch, to others as Mexican stitch.

To work Honeycomb or Mexican Stitch.—To obtain the best result work the small foundation stitches in one tone and the interlacing in another. If worked on a material where the warp and weft threads are distinct the small stitches may be kept quite regular without difficulty, otherwise it is better to mark their position by means of a ruler and pencil. The spacing will vary according to the material and the thread used ; about half an inch should be left between each small stitch for bold effective work, and the second row should alternate with the first. When all are in position, a long thread is taken for the interlacing, which is done in rows. Fasten the thread at the right top corner, and, eye of needle foremost, pass through the first stitch in the top row, down to the second, up to the top row again, and so on, as shown in Fig. 14. As the edges are undefined, this stitch requires a good firm outline round it.

Table Runner (Plate V) of cream cotton canvas, or netting, is of a very open texture ; it is treated in a simple direct manner, which is both pleasing to the eye and interesting to the worker.

It may be made of half-a-yard of material, 54 inches by 18 inches. The pattern is worked in wools and thick cottons, in stitchery eminently suited to the loosely-woven texture.

Method of working :—Turn over on to the front surface a single fold of about 1 inch on each side and tack in place to prevent fraying ; later on these raw edges will

An Embroidery Book

be covered with galoon or braid. Allow about 12 inches at each end for the wide hem, and from there about 14 inches for the needle-weaving. Get the centre line by means of a measuring tape ; cut ten warp threads at each end of the bar, which in this material is about three-quarters of an inch. Great care must be taken in cutting the top threads to see that they correspond exactly with those already cut. It is a good plan to draw the two outer threads a little, the tightening of which will indicate the exact place to cut the upper ones. This bar should be worked before the adjacent bars are cut. Leave a strip of material about half an inch wide on either side, then proceed to cut the weft threads, as before, for the broader bands—each is about one-and-three-quarter inches wide, so that twenty-four threads are withdrawn.

In weaving these wide strips, a frame is of assistance on account of the very soft nature of the material : the pattern should be easily followed from the illustration, but perhaps a few suggestions might help the beginner: Fig. 31 gives the method of weaving. Start with cream cotton or flax ; run a few stitches on the under side ; bring the needle to the point and weave, by passing over three of the double warp threads and under three, backwards and forwards, until these upright threads are completely covered—it is necessary during this process to press down the threads closely from time to time, and care must be taken not to tighten the groups too much or the material will get puckered. Repeat these woven bars in different groups of colour to the end of the strip, which gives five groups in cream flax and three in colour, jade



A BUREAU SCARF.

Button-hole and Border Stitches

green, reddish-purple, royal blue. Cover the half-inch bands of material with a herring-bone or oriental stitch, worked in cream linen floss embroidery thread. Take up the strands in groups of three on either side—this separates the threads into groups and simplifies the weaving of the next strip. Proceed now with the more elaborate weaving. It will be noticed that the weaving moves in a step-like manner, and that the pattern changes three times in each ascending or descending line, so that each line from edge to edge is divided into threads. Begin with the green group and pass under and over four groups of thread (in Plate V. the group worked in purple is the most distinct). Each group, as before, consists of three double warp strands ; weave one-third of the space, then leave out the fourth group ; continue to weave on three groups for another third of the space ; leave out the third group ; finish with two groups. Overcast one stitch into the canvas and weave over two fresh groups downwards for one-third of the distance, then over the next two groups of the second third ; then take up the two next groups and weave to the edge of the threads—thus weaving diagonally in groups of two from the bottom of the bar, this last row produces a series of steps. Repeat the same in ascending groups ; finish exactly in the same manner as before, with the exception that the weaving over four groups is this time at the top of the bar—these masses of weaving are separated by plain bars of cream, woven over four groups. The cut threads at the top are button-holed to keep them secure. Lines of darning stitches connect the edges with the woven bars. The bands of galoon are now laid over the turned-

An Embroidery Book

over folds, hemstitched on the one side and button-holed on the other, with dull blue; a line of tacking stitch in cerise gives a touch of bright colour to the outer edge.

Turn up about 6 inches at each end to give weight to the hems; fill the central parts with darning stitches worked in rows—it is best to mark off the central unworked space with lines before beginning this darning; this serves as a guide and prevents the stitching from encroaching on the space.

The galoon on either side is attached with button-holing and French knots—the spaces being filled with laid threads in cream, couched in the same colour. Latchet darns give emphasis and connect the green bars. Finally, the band of green is placed over the hem to finish it. The edges of the galoon are button-holed with blue to correspond with the rest of the runner.

Latchet darns are bands of weaving; the upright threads are laid, not too closely, to represent the warp threads, then the weft threads are woven in backwards and forwards; the edges are kept free exactly as in the other woven bars. These latchet darns make an excellent finish either to a bag, where they serve to hold the drawing-up cords, or to a dress, where they ornament or keep the belt in position.

All strands withdrawn, when of a useful length, should be carefully kept. They can be used in many different ways to make cords, tassels, or fringes.

CHAPTER VII

LAI D WORK—BASKET AND LINE STITCHES

“And thou shalt embroider the coat of fine linen, and thou shalt make the girdle of needlework.”

A Sideboard Cloth.—Plate VI. gives an example of a very handsome sideboard cloth. The canvas is of the tough hard-wearing type, generally used to cover basket hampers, but under the skilful fingers of the embroideress it became a beautiful piece of work, with which one might well adorn a good piece of furniture. The illustration shows the design, which is of the simple straight-line type. The canvas, of rather a heavy weight, is of a rich warm brown; the threads of floss embroidery linen are in rich blue, tussore colour, emerald green, grey-green, a pale blue-green and brown. The design is placed at the ends, where it forms bars and blocks of rich colouring. It occupies about 8 or 9 inches, $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches for the embroidery, and $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches for the wide band of braid. The stitchery is made up of bars of needle-weaving with bars and blocks of solid embroidery. The wide bands at the top and foot, enclosing the central portion, are of needle-weaving in a perfectly simple pattern. Each band is about 1 inch wide; they are worked in blue-brown and three shades of green. The bar in the central panel is woven in tussore and light green, surrounded by a border in satin stitch of emerald green. The upright bars or

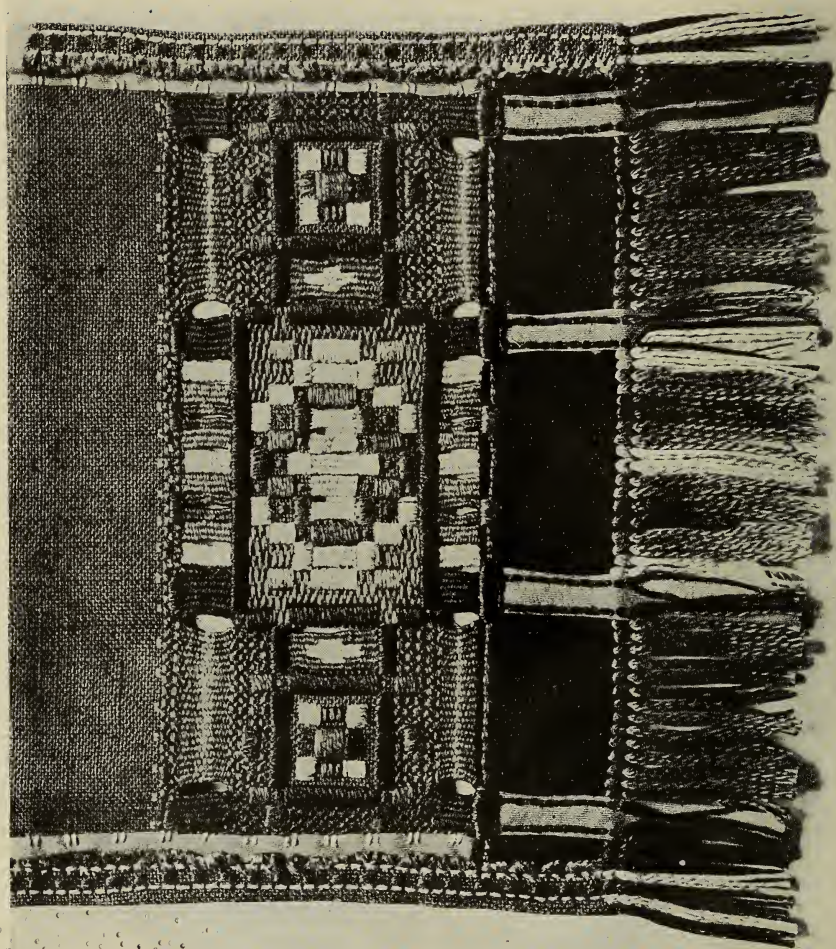
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straps on either side are woven in bright blue with blue-green crosses in the centre ; the chequered squares in tussore and blue are enclosed by emerald green bands in satin stitch. The background of the central panel is worked in chequers of blue tussore and light bluish-green ; the little crosses, hardly visible in the illustration, are all in emerald, while the darning stitch, which forms the background, is in bright blue.

Square Stitch.—The remainder of the background is worked in square stitch (see Figs. L and M). A fold of the canvas turned over on to the right side has a frayed edge ; three or four threads are withdrawn—this gives a pretty soft effect ; the fold is tacked down over a creamy-fawn skirt braid, with lines of couching in tussore. These lines have the appearance of back stitching, but are in reality couched down ; they are sewn in that interesting method of bygone days, when embroiderers worked much in gold threads.

“ Point rentré et retiré.”—The surface thread is pulled through and caught underneath by means of another thread which never appears upon the surface at all ; this method has been applied to backgrounds worked in silk, as well as in gold (p. 81). It is economical in use and very durable. One can well understand the reason of its use, but not the cause of its falling out of use. Probably this was due to the gradual decadence of embroidery in this country towards the end of the fourteenth century, or perhaps the then new method of couching—in use at the present day—involved less time and labour.

* The wide dark bar at the end of the work is of dark



A SIDEBOARD CLOTH

Laid Work

brown braid, about $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches wide, with straps of the lighter braid couched down in brown thread; these straps are carried down over the fringe which has been added in the various colours with a crochet hook (p. 115). The sideboard cloth is 54 inches by 22 inches wide. The fringe is about 4 inches deep.

Laid Work.—Laid work is particularly effective for the filling of large surfaces, where a bold definite mass of colour is required. It is a method of applying threads which gives a rich appearance almost similar to that achieved by the *appliqué* of some rich silk material. The stitches are on the surface only and are generally very long; they have to be crossed and recrossed by other strands, which in their turn are tied down by little stitches. When worked in floss silk, a favourite medium with Eastern embroiderers, it is a stitch *par excellence* for showing off the beauty and lustrous sheen of the thread, but it is not a very durable type of work, and is therefore only suitable for such articles as are not exposed to hard wear, unless worked in wools or thick cottons. All the threads on the surface are “laid,” as the term is, in parallel lines either vertical or in whatever direction is best, in order to allow the couching lines to accentuate the form or pattern; it adds to the durability of the work if these threads are laid rather widely apart to begin with, as it allows the needle to get a firmer hold of the material; the spaces are then filled up by working over the surface a second time. Compare Fig. 15 and note first layer of stitches. For example, let us suppose the vertical threads are laid—the horizontal ones, of another colour perhaps, could be placed over

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them, about three-quarters of an inch apart; small upright stitches, about half an inch apart, could couch, or fasten these down, one row alternating with the other. This is a most decorative method of filling in large flowers or leaves. Single petals can be laid diagonally, crossed and tied down, or a complete flower may have laid lines radiating from the centre, with the second layer of threads in concentric circles couched down with

small stitches of a contrasting colour.

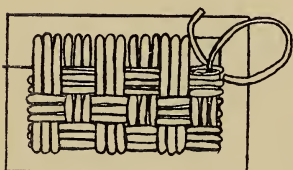


FIG. 15.

Chequered or Basket Pattern (Fig. 15).—Fig. 15 gives a plaited or basket pattern; after the vertical threads are laid or placed in

position in such a way as to lie easily—just filling the form—the weaving in of the cross threads is a simple matter.

To work a Chequered Pattern.—Begin at the right-hand corner and pass the needle over and under three strands for three rows, then reverse the chequer by lifting the stitches previously passed over. This work looks much better if the darning is all done from right to left. It is not so economical in thread, but much more practical on account of its greater durability, as the threads all lie the same way; they are carried back behind the material instead of being worked to and fro as in ordinary darning.

The Italian, Spanish and Japanese embroiderers make great use of these laid stitches which, like most other stitches, probably originated in the East, as they are to be met with in most oriental embroideries.

Line Stitches

Basket or Stroke Stitch (Fig. 16).—This figure gives another good line in rather high relief stitchery. It is sometimes called plaited stitch, sometimes fishbone, but it is really a stroke stitch; it is most effective and useful for a solid line, whether worked on coarse material with a thick twisted thread, or on fine material with a correspondingly fine twisted silk thread. It has a strong resemblance to some of the plaited Slav or Algerian stitches. It may be easily worked on most materials, especially if a couple of guiding lines are traced before setting to work. Quite a broad border may be attempted which will look well if worked in a coarse thread.



FIG. 16.

To work Basket Stitch.—Bring out the needle at the top of the line on the left; make a slanting stitch downwards to the right line; pass the needle under the material and bring it out on the left opposite; take a slanting stitch upwards over the first stitch to the right and insert the needle a little lower than the level of the first stitch; then pass under the material to the left side again and bring it out just under the first stitch; take a slanting stitch downwards again and continue by taking a cross and a slanting stitch alternately.

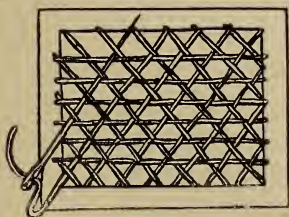


FIG. 17.

Net stitch can also be used as a surface stitch or as a filling for an open space. It is a method of interlacing

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which one frequently finds on the seats of small chairs, in the construction of baskets and other wicker articles. It may be worked with the lines set further apart than those in the figure. The horizontal lines are stretched first, not too tightly; these are followed by oblique lines which start from the left lower corner. The final row, also in oblique lines, starts at the right; each row is interlaced with two others. It is useful and most effective when used as a surface stitch, as a filling for geometrical forms; when used as a lace stitch worked in a linen thread the lines may be duplicated. This net is generally the foundation on which the design is made.

Openwork Hems (Fig. 12).—Openworked hems may usually be applied to all types of woven materials, to drawn thread work, and to household linen. They are more decorative than the ordinary hem.

Method :—Draw out the number of threads required—this will always depend on the quality of the material, and varies from two to six; lay the folds for the hem and tack them just above the open space; fasten the thread on the left and insert the needle from right to left under four, five, or six threads; pull through the needle and re-insert, taking a vertical stitch under three or four threads of the folded material. Plate V. shows a border of green galoon fixed with hemstitching on the inner side; as the material is very loosely woven, no threads have been withdrawn. The same stitch is used for a heading for a fringe (Fig. 34); it prevents the material from fraying and collects the strands into groups.

Ladder Hemstitch.—A more open appearance may be given by withdrawing a few more threads and hem-

Line Stitches

stitching the lower edges also ; this makes a narrow insertion, for by grouping the same threads together, as in the upper row, little perpendicular strips are formed which gives wider spacing—the bars suggest the rungs of a ladder, and on this account it is generally known as ladder hemstitching.

Vandyke Insertion.—A vandyke form is also effective ; it is worked by grouping the stitches of the second or lower row, after hemstitching the upper row, in the following method :—Take up half the threads of the first cluster and half of the second on the needle, then proceed as in upper row ; by dividing the groups of the upper row in this way a series of slanting stitches is formed when the lower row is complete.

Antique Hemstitch.—There are several other ways of hemstitching which only vary slightly ; perhaps the most decorative form is that usually seen on old embroideries, where the thread is carried round a narrow rolled hem, not a folded one.

Method :—Work from right to left, beginning at the right corner ; pass the needle over and under a cluster of four threads ; draw it out at the place inserted ; pass it over the edge of the rolled hem and bring it out on the left of the cluster, ready to take the next stitch, over and under the second group of four strands.

Roumanian Stitch (Fig. 18).—Cretan, oriental, or Roumanian are the various names applied to this well-known stitch.

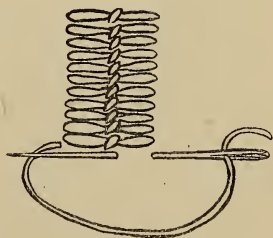


FIG. 18.

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It is frequently to be met with in the early English embroideries, particularly those of the seventeenth century. It is one of those adaptable stitches which are so helpful for the decoration of borders, fillings, leaves, flowers; it has therefore always been much used by embroiderers.

To work Fig. 18.—This figure hardly needs description, being merely a long stitch tacked down. Begin on the left of the space to be filled; insert the needle on the right edge and bring it up in the centre; take a small stitch over the stretched thread to fix it down and bring the needle out at the left edge again, just below the first stitch. If the thread is stretched loosely across as in the V-shaped portion of the braid collar, Plate IX., a broad and effective means of filling narrow spaces or tacking a braid in position can be obtained with economy of time and material.

To work Fern or Fish-bone Stitch (Fig. 19).—This stitch, somewhat similar in form, also makes a good border line or even a filling, if worked in rows, see Fig. D, Plate XI., where a centre line of material gives the rib.



FIG. 19.

In Fig. 19 the stitches meet in the centre and have a definite central rib. A central line should be marked on the material before starting to work it. Bring the thread out at the left; take a slanting stitch towards the centre and insert the needle just beyond the line; bring it out at the opposite edge; take another slanting stitch and insert just beyond the line again. This slight over-

Line Stitches

lapping of the stitches in the middle gives the solid effect to the stitch.

Chequered Fern Stitch.—A pleasing variation may be introduced into a quiet border by working this stitch in two colours ; two or three stitches worked in each colour will give a chequered effect, and help to relieve monotony if necessary. Work with two threads, bringing each to the surface as required. This stitch makes a good filling for leaves, the mid line being suggestive of the mid-rib.

Loop-stitch Border (Fig. 20).—This border is of the familiar loop or petal stitch. It has been already described (Figs. 3A and 3B). It makes a very pretty border between broad bars of needle-weaving. The method of working is quite the same, the only difference being in the length of the tying stitch, which in this border forms the stem, while in the flowers it ties the edges of the petals ; the loops are thus reversed in the working. The border may easily be followed from Fig. 20. Plate VIII. shows this stitch applied to the edges of the squares at the corners, where it serves to accentuate them as well as to soften their outline.

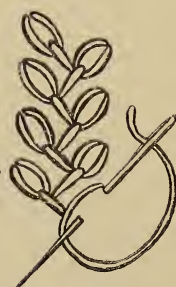


FIG. 20.

Table Mat of White Linen.—Plate VII. gives a table mat embroidered in blue ; it is the central mat of an afternoon tea set. The design is of a very simple nature, composed by the loops and curves of the French tape. The main curves are formed of four short lengths which meet at the ends and sides. Each piece of tape

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takes a curve at the centre and begins and ends with a spiral; the outer sides can be put in with one length of braid—eight short pieces will do equally well; little remainders may be economically disposed of in this way. The inner parts of the curves give the opportunity for openwork detail which enriches, while it lightens the background. The design should be drawn out on paper. All lines which represent the braid must be parallel and spaced as nearly as possible to correspond to the width of it; it is important to remember that braid spreads when curving and therefore the centres of loops or circles become smaller when placed on the material; this must be allowed for in the drawing out of the design. Care and accuracy are necessary both in forming the curves and in tacking on the braid; the beauty of the work would be marred by uncertain lines and unequal curves.

Plate VII. has not much variety of stitch; the relief given by the blue stitches prevents any feeling of monotony.

Method.:—Tack on the braid round the outer edges; overseam the inner edges of the parts which take the curves; prepare for the more open spaces by snipping the linen, the way of the warp and the weft, quite close to the braid; then turn the edges in under the braid and button-hole with blue thread, not too closely, the needle should enter easily into the head of the stitches for the making of the lace stitch—“*Point de Réprise*.” These openings may be backed by small pieces of *toile cirée*; a little medallion of button-holed linen should be placed in the centre and tacked firmly in



A TABLE CENTRE IN WHITE AND BLUE

A Table Mat

place. The connecting threads for the weaving of the little bars or bridges are laid in two or four strands, according to the fineness of the thread. Begin at the outer edge ; carry the thread to the inner medallion, and slip the needle, eye first, through a loop of button-hole stitch ; overcast the next one, and carry the thread from there back to the outer edge ; then weave over and under these two strands till the centre is reached. Oversew one or two button-hole loops and lay the threads for the next bridge ; this, when woven, will finish at the outer edge again. Oversew the stitches until the position for the next bar is reached, and continue till the circle is filled in. The corners are worked similarly with a few added bridges here and there to fill in spaces, which would otherwise be rather empty. These oval openings and ends might be worked in what is known as Richelieu work, instead of in the manner described. It is rather a quicker method, but not quite so firm, nor are the bars so flat.

Method :—Button-hole the inner edge of the space, also round the edge of the little inside medallion ; then lay three strands of thread as the foundation of the bridges (see Fig. 24) ; button-hole these to the edge and oversew the button-hole stitches of the outer edge until the thread is in position for the next strap.

When the work is finished, the linen under the bars is carefully cut away with a very sharp pair of embroidery scissors.

Run round the outer edges of the spaces which are to be filled in with a filet or net pattern with two rows of tacking stitch to strengthen, and button-hole over this.

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To prepare the mesh background, turn on the wrong side, then cut six and pass six horizontal threads alternately; remove the cut threads; turn the work half round and prepare the threads, previously the vertical ones, in the same way, that is, cut and withdraw six, pass six. Turn the work to the right side again and oversew the strands, one stitch into each little space, taking care to let the stitches slant in the same direction on the return row. This groundwork is also described in connection with Plate XV. The braid has a row of French knots in blue to finish the inner edge. For the finishing of the edges of the mat, a firmer edge will be made by cutting the linen a quarter of an inch beyond the braid and turning it back under the braid, then button-hole this double edge and the braid together in blue. The little lace edge may be worked with the needle or with the crochet hook; in Plate VII. the latter was used. The lower loops are worked in white, the edging in blue with picots is worked into it. For description, see Chapter XIII. on crochet edgings.

CHAPTER VIII

COUCHING—FRENCH KNOTS AND BULLION STITCH

“When she rode in coach abroad, was always knotting thread.”

COUCHING is a pleasant and most useful method of applying threads, cords or braids to materials of various kinds. For filling in forms, circles, or squares it is equal to chain stitch, and should be worked similarly—all forms, whether squares or curves, are better to be commenced from the outer edge and worked inwards, in order to preserve the shape. Special care is required for the outlining of squares or angular forms where the tendency is to tighten the applied material, whether threads or braids, in turning the corners. At these points the threads or braids should lie easily and they should be firmly sewn down with closer stitchery. Couching is one of the simplest means of decorating velvet, a material always difficult of manipulation, and particularly so for the beginner, on account of the pile, which is apt to cause irregularity in the stitchery.

Couching (Figs. 21, 21a).—This stitch is often worked in a frame—it is easier to keep the material stretched; when working diagonal lines or circles, where much of the stitchery comes on the cross of the material, it is advisable to do so. By means of couching, the embroideress may sharply define an outline, fill

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in various forms, geometric or otherwise, repair a worn surface, work diaper patterns, or attach metal threads and braids to her embroidery (Plate XVI.).

It is a name applied to a method of attaching threads singly or in groups to a foundation by means



FIG. 21.

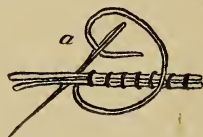


FIG. 21A.

of another thread, usually a single one. Under all circumstances this should be finer than the thread or cord sewn down. It is most economical in use as the threads lie on the surface—a point well worth consideration (Plate III.).

Probably it was originally used for the sewing on of gold threads, which were too precious to be wasted, being made of pure metal—naturally the difficulty of drawing these metal threads through the material would lead to the simplest means of attachment. At any rate, this method of sewing on gold threads was in general use all over Europe as early as the twelfth century.

Couching is particularly useful as an outline to stitching, especially where a weak line requires defining. An irregularly sewn form, whether floral or geometrical, may be much improved, and the colour may also be enhanced, by a firmly couched outline. It is most convenient for sewing down applied work. Primarily it covers the join, and is of considerable importance in aiding the colour



A LUNCHEON MAT. (See page 86.)

Couching, French Knots, Bullion Stitch

scheme (Plate IV.). Where simple treatment shows to advantage, couched threads, outlined with metal cord, give the necessary means of expressing taste and choice of colour, and with a little extra stitching to indicate veinings or whatever detail there may be, couching can again be applied with good results, instead of resorting to another stitch. It is worked from right to left; the small tying down stitches may be straight or slanted, but they ought not to be placed too far apart—for simple decorative work, from a sixteenth to a quarter of an inch, the latter for the attaching of wools or yarns and narrow braids, the former for finer work. One of the commonest mistakes of a beginner is to couch with a thick thread, each stitch varying from a half to one-and-a-half inches apart. This entirely destroys the character and effect of the applied threads. When couching a straight line with cord or braid it should be held rather tightly, while with wool or silk a pretty bead-like appearance can be got by holding the thread rather loosely (Plate XVI.).

The fashion of sewing on a cord invisibly—as in upholstery—by untwisting the cord slightly between each stitch should never be resorted to for embroidery.

Ancient method of Couching, “Point rentré et retiré.”—A most interesting method of couching, which unfortunately fell out of use, was practised up till the middle of the fourteenth century. The couching thread was on the reverse side, and was generally of strong waxed linen thread, which did not appear on the surface at all. The ground material was formed of two layers of linen, and the gold or silk thread was kept on the

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surface, only penetrating the layers of linen at intervals where the linen couching thread had drawn it through.

Some of the beautiful specimens of early English work, the famous Syon Cope and the Jesse Cope, to be seen in the Victoria and Albert Museum, the backgrounds of which are covered with couching done in this quaint and durable fashion, are well worth studying. The linen background of the Syon Cope is couched in coloured silk, that of the Jesse Cope in fine gold.

The two lines on the outer edges of the sideboard runner, which has almost the appearance of back stitching, are worked in this way (Plate VI.).

French Knots (Figs. 22a, 22b).—French knots can be applied with artistic effect in many ways, not as an

outline, but as an adjunct to some of the line stitches, such as chain stitch, couching, back stitch, etc. (Plate XIV.). They may be used to add touches of colour to a pattern, to modify or enrich it (Plate

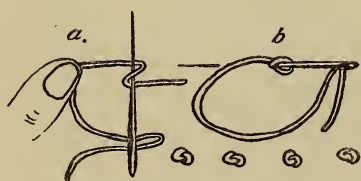


FIG. 22A.

FIG. 22B.

XIII.); to powder backgrounds, either single or in clusters, qualifying both texture and colour; to outline or fill in flower centres, to form stamens (Plate XI.); to fill in lattice patterns or any form that requires some contrast of stitch or colour.

Method :—To work a French knot, bring out the needle at the point where the knot is to be; place the thumb of the left hand over the thread (Fig. 22A); twist

Couching, French Knots, Bullion Stitch

the needle once round this tightened thread; turn the point to the right—thumb still holding the thread—and insert it just behind the point where it came out, and draw the thread through to the back, or when some experience has been gained, the needle may be drawn through on the right side in position for the next knot.

The Chinese, who are adepts, frequently work entire pieces of embroidery in knots with such care and precision that they are almost mechanical in appearance. They have a method of knotting their thread first, then sewing each knot down. This method was also common in England about the seventeenth century. At that time ladies used to work up hanks of thread, and, by means of a small cushion and a netting needle, work a succession of knots on the entire length; these hanks were wound up into balls ready for applying to the work in hand.

It is better in making French knots to use a thick thread, or if a large knot is required, two or more threads in the needle are more satisfactory than twisting one several times round the needle. Plate V. shows knots applied to the edges of the galloon, which serve to fix it down, as well as to give a finish to the latchet darns.

Bullion Knots (Fig. 23).—Bullion knots are frequently used in white embroidery where variety of stitch is made use of in order to relieve the monotony. They consist of little tight coils of thread and can be used most successfully to form

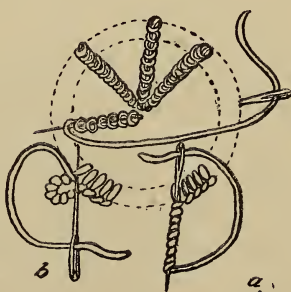


FIG. 23.

G 2

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the centres of large flowers, either in a mass or in pattern. Squares or lozenge-shaped forms with a French knot in each space make rather interesting fillings.

Fig. 23 shows how bullion knots might be applied in lines radiating from the centre to form small flowers.

Flower Centre in Bullion Stitch.—*Method of working*.—Bring the thread up on the surface at the centre; insert the needle at the outer edge of the circle, and draw it out for half its length at the centre, beside the thread, which now take hold of with the right hand, and twist firmly, but not too tightly, round the needle six or eight times according to the size of knot required. Then place the thumb of the left hand on the coil and draw the thread carefully through till it is tight. It is always advisable to keep the thumb over the coil during the whole process if possible.

A Good Flower Centre.—Make a number of bullion knots to fit the circle, then surround the outer circle with one or two rows of close regularly-sized French knots. Bullion stitch may be used for small flowers—each petal being made of two knots, meeting at the tip—for leaves, inside fillings, ground powderings and sprigs.

Fig. 23 *a* shows how to make picots in bullion stitch. They are generally worked into a bar or loop of button-hole stitch, which may form an edging, as in Fig. 37, or an open loop, as in Fig. 23 *b*. Picots of this type when worked in a fine linen thread are used for the outlines and edgings of laces. To work as Fig. 23 *a*, make the required number of button-hole stitches, then insert the needle for half its length through the head of the last one; twist the thread round the needle from left to

Couching, French Knots, Bullion Stitch

right six, eight, or ten times, according to the thickness of the thread and the size of the picot required ; place the thumb of the left hand over the coil and draw the needle and thread gently through ; keeping the thumb still on the coil, tighten the thread until the stitch has been drawn up into a small semi-circle ; then continue the button-hole stitch till the next picot is reached. Note Fig. 23 *b*—the thread is placed under the needle before it is drawn through.

If a larger picot is required, it may be made in button-hole stitch instead of bullion stitch. Button-hole the bar or loop to the left of the required picot, and lay the foundation or padding threads for the picot by carrying a thread to and fro three times from the left to the right ; pass the needle each time through the edges of the button-hole ; when the third thread is laid the needle is at the right side of the picot ; button-hole the loop closely till it is covered, then continue on to the next point. Open-looped button-hole edging looks very well with three bullion stitch picots, but the worker requires to be of a patient temperament, as each loop takes some time to work.

Bullion knots are used very frequently in Mountmellick work. This type of needlework originated in Ireland ; it is of a very elaborate nature, generally done in coarse white threads on a strong white linen or jean foundation. Here monotony in tone allows for a great variety of stitching. Openwork is not combined with it, as the patterns in which it is worked are mostly of a bold conventional floral type ; most of the stitches used are those which give a raised effect, such as the different

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linked stitches, chain, cable, raised-stem stitches, French and bullion knots, and padded satin stitch. The flowers are filled in with a great variety of lace stitches.

Button-hole bars are useful for connecting two edges such as the two sides of a lined bag, the seams of a child's frock, or for adding a false hem to any dainty article. They are in common use for modern openwork embroidery, where they form connecting links between the various parts of the design.

Button-hole Bars (Fig. 24).—Fig. 24 shows the method of working connecting bars. The objects to be joined together may be of any shape, provided the lines are more or less parallel with each other. Begin by button-holing one part of the work, which will give a basis or line into which the bars may be worked, then button-hole the part to be joined to it a

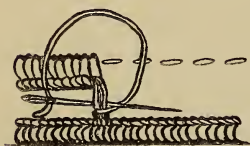


FIG. 24.

few stitches, until the place where the bar is to be is reached; lay each of the threads into a different loop of the button-holing—this gives a greater strength and wider surface to work upon; when finished, button-hole along the edge as before, until the next point where a bar is to be worked is reached. These bars are worked over three threads, and should, when worked in lines, be made before the material is cut, otherwise it is better to have the two parts to be joined tacked down on to a piece of stiff linen, glazed calico, or brown paper.

A Luncheon Set.—This illustration gives a table centre in cream canvas embroidered in bright blue,

Couching, French Knots, Bullion Stitch

green, red, cream, yellow, heliotrope and black. The design is simple; it is more or less governed by the mesh of the material and the method of working it, which renders the construction so simple and gives a quaintness and rigidity admirable in effect. By examining the illustration it will be seen that the central portion of the design is occupied by a broad band of needle-weaving, about two inches wide, worked on the weft threads, the warp or vertical threads having been withdrawn to the required depth. The weaving forms seven separate groups, each of which is composed of two colours. The whole mass, rich in effect, is finished on either side with two bars of latchet darning; these are worked similarly to repairing darns, but are left free at the sides. They are edged with an oriental stitch in blue which may be worked much closer and more regularly (see Plate I., where, as a heading to the band of needle-weaving, it has almost the effect of a braid). The corners, which balance the wide needle-woven bar, are worked in chequers of red, green, and blue; the larger squares are in green, worked in a simple stitch similar to Fig. 18. A row of equally distributed petal or loop stitches (Fig. 3, p. 49) breaks the severity of the line; seven lines of couching—sewn in self-colours—connect the two ends. The edges of the cloth are turned over on the surface and finished with a row of blue galoon—Prussian binding; this is tacked in place on each side with little triangular stitches in green embroidery cotton. Through these stitches a thread of bright red is interlaced; this is followed by a second one in cream colour. Large tassels (Fig. 41, p. 120) in

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blue make a finish to the corners. Six little mats, 12 inches by 9 inches, when finished, were made to match, each having a border and couched lines similar to those of the scarf. Little blue tassels of appropriate size completed this useful little set.

One yard of material, 54 inches wide, is required to make the complete set, that is the table scarf, 54 inches wide by 24 inches, and six little mats, 14 inches by 10 inches; this allows for folds at ends and sides. If braid is used for finishing the hems, after calculating the quantity an extra yard should be allowed, as with so many corners to turn one is apt to be too short in the end, and these braids are often difficult to match.

Wools and thick cotton threads may be used and a large-eyed blunt-pointed needle for the weaving and darning.

CHAPTER IX

BRAIDS AND DESIGN—FAGGOTING—VEINING—ANTIQUE
SEAMS—KNOT INSERTION AND EDGING

“There’s nothing neere at hand, or fartherest sought,
But with the needle may be shap’d and wrought.”

Braids.—Braids in different widths are invaluable to the embroideress who wishes to execute rapidly a piece of work suitable for daily household use, which may possibly be exposed to the smoky and foggy city atmosphere, and on which she does not wish to expend much time, labour, or money.

Braids of various kinds and qualities—mohair, alpaca, woollen, cotton or silk—can be utilised in many ways, and for different objects, as well as for the finishing and decoration of hems and borders (Plates IX. and XII.).

Those which have an unbroken edge are the best for ornamental purposes. They may form the basis of simple geometrical patterns (Fig. 45); lines⁷ may be arranged to go in different ways, running vertically from end to end of a table scarf (Plate VI.), horizontally, as Plate III., or diagonally—the direction is immaterial; all are simple to arrange, with the exception of diagonal lines, which always require care in the placing and stitching, on account of the different stretching qualities of the braid

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and of the material. Sometimes the bands of braid are placed singly, sometimes in pairs, one braid—usually in a contrasting colour—being superimposed on the other. They may cross each other at right angles, they may entwine or interlace (Plate X.), or they may be formed into circles or spirals (Figs. 45, 51).

The manner in which braids themselves are made, with the twistings and interlacings of strands and groups of threads, is interesting; this renders them peculiarly suitable for the designing of interlacing patterns, both simple and intricate (Figs. 49, 50).

The word “braid” is taken from the verb of the old Anglo-Saxon “bregdan,” or “bredan,” signifying to weave, to entwine, to braid; the latter word bearing, in those days, the meaning “to plait,” a word which came into use at a later date.

The use of braid for decorative purposes has come down to us from very early times—it has always been used by Eastern peoples much more than by those of the Western countries. Some of the elaborately worked pieces of Indian and Persian work, where tinsel braids are freely employed, are things to marvel at.

The peasant costumes of many countries—particularly those for gala days—are made gorgeous by the addition of bands of brilliantly coloured braids, enriched in many cases by embroidery. Braids are used on uniforms, in an official sense, where they are considered as symbols of honour—the higher the grade, the more elaborate the decoration.

Care must be taken with the arrangement of these patterns—all curves must be exact, interlacing designs

Braids and Design

must be correct, the series of bands always passing alternately the one under the other.

The possibilities for the treatment of braids and bands, for the decoration and enrichment of them, open up an interesting field to the young designer. By comparing some of the plates it will be seen that much has been done in a simple way by the use of these braids and tapes.

Many of the old illuminated manuscripts show wonderful interlacing designs, many of which were copied or adapted by embroiderers of the period.

An old Venetian pattern book, published in 1562, gives beautiful examples of the letters of the alphabet worked first with an outline in narrow braid, an elaborate twisted design being then woven in and out of the double lines with a narrow braid, with the help of a tapestry needle; the delicate points and finishings of the letters being finished in satin stitch.

Perhaps the best way to go about a design in which bands of braid are to form the foundation of the design would be to take one form and try how it might be adapted to suit the conditions of space and material. A border for a circular form is simpler in construction than one for a square—the corners of the latter always requiring special attention—but after a few preliminary trials it will be readily seen what the possibilities are.

Interlacing Knots.—Interlacings of knots and bands are always interesting, and the working out of these designs should be a profitable exercise for a beginner. There is such variety in their construction, such simple or intricate patterns to be made out of these continuous

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and interlacing lines, that all craft workers have found in them a ready means of ornamentation. Knot designs of a simple kind may be applied in the form of braids and cords to many useful articles of domestic use ; the most direct way to work out some elementary designs would be to take a length of soft cord and some pins, and using the back of a cushion as a foundation, or a covered table, pin out a geometrical design—a square would be suitable for the first attempt—and develop it. The first square might have the braids twisted into small loops at the corners, the second might have the sides indented or looped, and so on. Make a series of these with every possible variation ; then all could be drawn in a note-book, in squared paper—for the sake of ease and accuracy. The ends of the cords or braids should be pinned together in order to form a continuous band.

The next step would be to interweave a second length of cord into those already formed. Care is necessary to interlace the bands, so that each passes over and under the other in regular rotation. This second band might take the form of another square, set the reverse way, or a circular form might be introduced. When all possibilities have been worked out, they also should be noted. By degrees more complicated and intricate knots may be attempted.

Sometimes an elaborate form may be worked out on paper to begin with, then interlaced and pinned out in cord. The embroideress will find a note-book and a square of canvas very useful for reference, also as aids to memory : in the former, she can make notes of

Faggoting

designs and suitable detail, of colour schemes taken from pictures, materials and embroideries, suggestions for finishing and fastenings of garments, little notes and quotations suitable for embroidery—all sorts of interesting matter which the eye is quick to see but which the memory cannot always recall at the right moment. In the square of canvas or coarse linen, divided into sections, might be worked some of the more interesting or unusual stitches, or groups of stitches ; or pleasing combinations of stitches and colour might be preserved as the opportunity occurred. These might serve to suggest or recall methods and varieties suitable to some work in hand.

Faggoting.—Faggoting is a stitch which is used to connect two edges, particularly such edges as require a dainty finish, or to fill in an open space, or to serve as a foundation for some interlacing stitch. It is much used for joining ribbons, braids, or thin materials, such as ninon, chiffon, or crêpe.

Method :—Prepare the material for faggoting by tacking it on to a piece of stiff *toile cirée*, glazed calico, or if that is not at hand, stiff brown paper will answer the purpose. This is done in order to keep the edges at an equal distance. The width of the space may vary from one-quarter to three-quarters of an inch ; the joining thread should vary in thickness—the wider the space, the thicker the thread. Draw two parallel lines on the foundation as a guide, if necessary, and tack the material to these lines. If a braid or ribbon or any material with a finished edge is used, there is no need for turnings, but with a raw edge it is necessary to turn in three-eighths of an inch and to press them with an iron before starting.

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To work the stitch, begin at the upper end of the left-hand corner with a small stitch; cross to the opposite side; take a stitch, keeping the thread under the needle; work alternately from side to side, always inserting the needle from the outside. Keep the stitch regular, the same size and the intervals of equal distance.

Faggoting is practically a herring-bone stitch, but the needle is inserted vertically. See Plate I. and compare the stitchery in blue which forms a line up either side. It forms the foundation for many interlacing stitches of

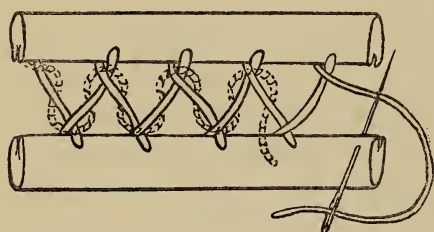


FIG. 25.

which there are quite a variety adaptable to various purposes.

By interlacing threads as in Fig. 25, where the dotted line represents the interwoven thread, the whole of the founda-

tion stitches can be covered. It must be done in rows, one after the other. The first row is drawn much tighter than the one in Fig. 25, each successive row being placed on the outside of the previous row, till eventually the faggoting foundation has almost disappeared.

A very good line of raised stitchery can be worked on to a foundation of herring-bone stitching. The threads are laced in, one row at a time, as shown in Fig. 25. See Plate XIV., where it is worked round the outer edge, also in the nightdress case (Plate XI.), where it forms the narrow inner border.

Faggoting

“Point d’Alencon.”—Faggot or Russian is one of the stitches used in the making of point lace or Honiton point. As a lace stitch, it goes under the name of “*Point d’Alencon*.” It is used to join the braids; it also makes one of the principal filling stitches for leaves or oval spaces.

Veining (Fig. 26).—Fig. 26 shows a well-known joining stitch, which looks well if done in a twisted silk, wool, or linen. It makes a pretty insertion, and adds much to the appearance of a seam. It is a narrow line stitch, therefore the two edges of the material should not be too widely spaced. Prepare the edges in the same manner as for faggoting and tack them on to a stiff foundation.

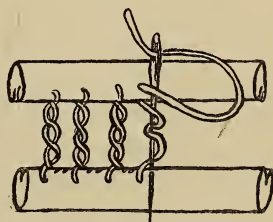


FIG. 26.

Method:—Fasten the thread to the edge of the material; carry the needle across to the opposite edge; insert it under and bring it through the material; twist the thread twice round the needle and insert it on the opposite side from underneath, as shown in the diagram; oversew a few stitches along the edge to carry the thread into position for the next stitch. This insertion is useful for joining braids, for dress fitments and other purposes; it is much in vogue for the joining of thin materials, such as chiffon and ninon or crêpe; these require to have a fold laid and pressed before being tacked on to the paper.

A very pretty addition to a border, whether for a piece of ornamental work, for the edging of a collar, the joining up of a bag, or for the foot of a jumper, is made

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by inserting between the material a line of gold tinsel or velvet ribbon, braid, or even material of a contrasting colour. This must be tacked on firmly to a foundation of stiff calico or brown paper, then attached by an insertion to the edges of the material.

This stitch, whether used as an insertion or as a filling, must also in this case be carefully arranged and regularly worked, otherwise the appearance of the work is spoiled. The threads should in all cases be tightened sufficiently to give the necessary firm twist to the line. To obtain the technique of many of these insertion stitches it is only needful to practise them for a few minutes on a piece of material as a preliminary to the actual working of them. This enables the worker to see what size of thread to use, and it gives her the opportunity of trying and comparing various colours without the irksome task of unpicking.

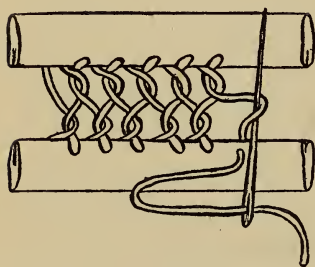


FIG. 27.

Fig. 27 is worked much the same as Russian stitch (Fig. 25), except that it is worked closer and the thread picked up by the point of the needle before it is inserted on the opposite side—this twisted

faggot stitch is really a combination of the veining and faggot insertion and is used for the same purposes.

Antique Seam (Fig. 28).—In earlier times, when the linens were woven in narrower widths, the seams were always connected in a more interesting method than at the present day, when, if a flat seam is wanted, the



THREE COLLARS. (See page 162.)

Faggoting

selvages are invariably oversewn. One of the older methods is shown in Fig. 28. It makes a firm, flat and decorative row of stitching. For the joining of selvages of bed-linen a narrow slanting stitch sewn in white was used; for more decorative purposes a coloured and a larger straight stitch was used, as Fig. 29. To work, lay the two selvages parallel to each other and tack or pin them quite flat. Begin on the left side and insert the needle from below on the right and left sides alternately; in this way the threads cross each other between the selvages. In connecting a very thin material in this way it makes a good finish.

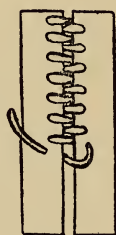


FIG. 28.

Fig. 29 gives an effective stitch for a decorative joining of two edges. It may be applied to bands, cushion covers and household embroideries generally.

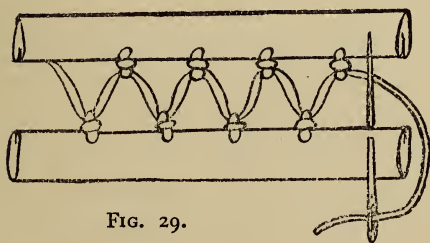


FIG. 29.

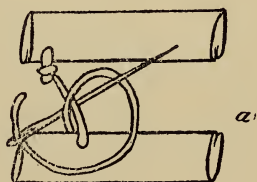


FIG. 29A.

To work.—Prepare the seams by placing the two selvages flat on to a stiff foundation, say quarter of an inch apart; secure the thread on the left upper edge; insert the needle at the lower edge a little to the right; pull through with the thread to the right of the needle;

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make a little stitch, as Fig. 29; pull through with the thread under the needle. This makes a good firm insertion; a thick twisted thread is the most suitable. Fig. 29 shows the insertion rather widely spaced. Plate XII. shows this stitch worked in wool, where it is applied to the edges of braids, which form the foundation for a useful collar.

A Useful Edging.—Fig. 30 gives a knotted loop stitch which is again borrowed from the many useful lace stitches. It is an edging which may be worked in silks, flax, cotton, threads, or wools. In Plate XII. it forms the finish to the braid collar, where it is worked in thick cotton

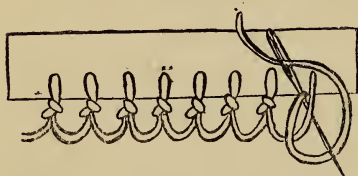


FIG. 30.

thread. This loop stitch makes a charming insertion if worked on to the edges of any suitable material—narrow ribbon or hat straws. The working of the stitch is clearly shown in Fig. 30. The two edges are joined with an interlacing stitch of a contrasting colour, with raffia, cord, or narrow ribbon. Bands of hat straw could be joined in this way and made up into delightful light and economical summer hats. The shape could be then placed over a foundation of wire and the brim stiffened with wire, button-holed on to the straw with a silk, flax, or raffia thread.

A Collar of Braid.—Plate XII. illustrates an interesting piece of work, built up of oddments of skirt braid, silver tinsel, braid, silks and wools.

Very charming dress and coat fitments may be made

Braids and Design

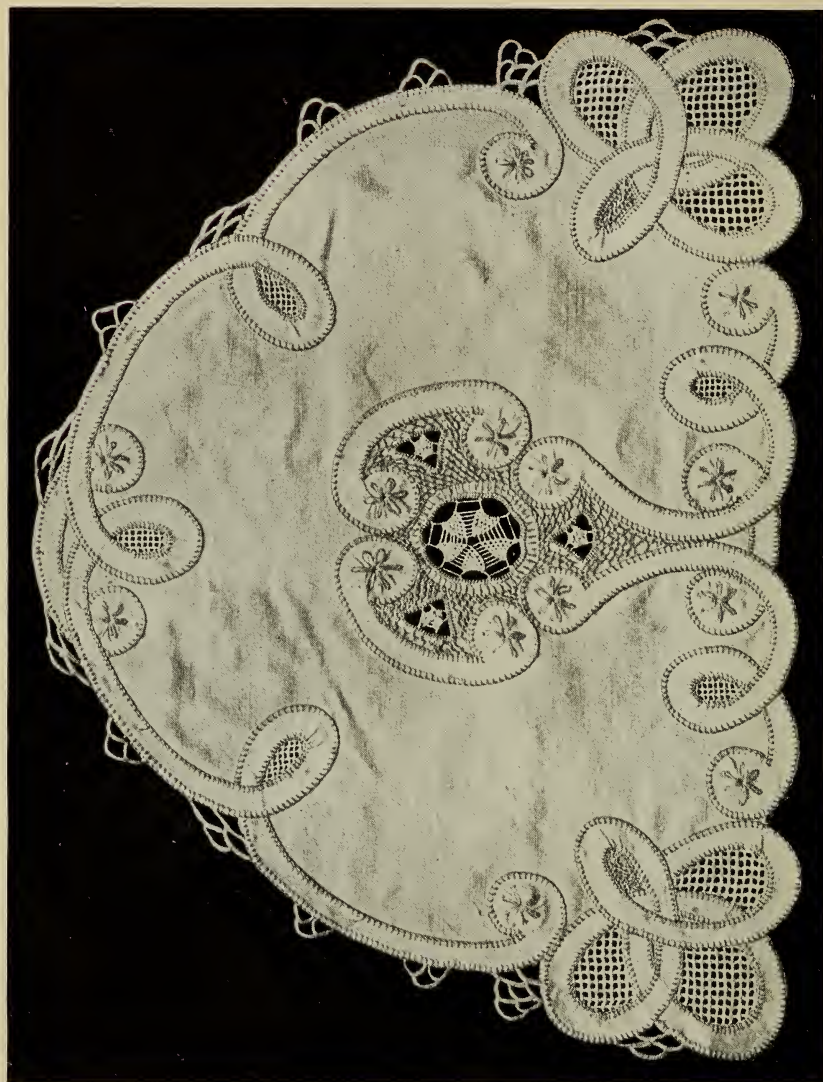
in this way, and all sorts of scraps and remainders of trimmings and braids, silk patches and patterns may be utilised. The construction is very simple. The best way to set about the making of these braid collars, cuffs, or bands is to cut out the desired shape—the exact size wanted. The pattern is then placed on to a piece of glazed calico and the outline traced firmly upon it. A still more direct method is to cut out the pattern in stiff brown paper and utilise it as the foundation on which to tack the braids. Care must be taken to have the shape correct before starting to work with the materials. This being assured, arrange a braid or cross-bar of material round the outer part; tack it at the outer edge with bright-coloured wool on to the paper foundation, then adjust the bars and panels, allowing the ends of the braids to slip under the outer braid. Circles or squares of ribbon, velvet, or tinsel, placed in the most important parts and tied to the outer edges with lines of braid or ribbon, which, in turn, might be connected with open stitchery, fork-pin insertion (Fig. 73), or some small beads, are very pretty. All give scope for individual taste and ingenuity in colour and material. If the collar is on the round, the outer bands must be flexible, in order to take the curve nicely.

The collar in the illustration has for the outer row a skirt braid of a soft dove grey. It is tacked in place with a line of couching in royal blue wool, sewn on with a silk thread—reel twist is very good—of the same colour; the stripes of cream-coloured braid are ornamented with coral-coloured wool in long stitches, tacked down the centre to form a point. The smaller

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panels have been placed in position previously; they consist of chequered silk ribbon in grey and heliotrope. All the short lines are connected with Russian stitch worked in coral wool, the bands of cream braid being laid on over them and then sewn down; finally the inner edge of the border is couched down. The edges are now all tucked out of sight, the brown paper is cut away from the back, all ends, edges and tags are secured and made neat with tiny overcasting stitches, and the collar may either be lined or sewn on in place without lining, as the case may be.

It is often necessary to confine the cut edges of the broad braid, in order to prevent them from spreading, by winding a thread round and tying it just above the part to be cut—this often saves time and trouble in the long run.



A TEA-COSY COVER (See p. 112)

CHAPTER X

INSERTIONS IN NEEDLE-WEAVING—POINT DE RÉPRISE— INTERLACING AND OPENWORK BACKGROUND

“There she weaves, by night and day,
A magic web with colours gay.”

A Chequered Pattern (Fig. 31).—Chequered patterns look well in needle-weaving. A number of colours may be introduced if the spacing permits.

Fig. 31 shows a diagram of needle-weaving which gives the method of working a chequered pattern on the upright or warp threads. Prepare the bar or band by removing the weaker (weft) threads; a little decorative line of stitchery may then be added by hemstitching, button-holing, or herring-boning the edges; this adds a finish and groups the warp threads into clusters which is an advantage—it saves trouble when the actual weaving begins by keeping the weft threads in place; cross stitch and oversewing are useful stitches for the same purpose. The worker should be careful to group the strands equally by dividing them into clusters

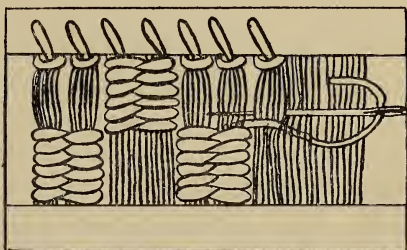


FIG. 31.

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of three, four, or six threads. In Fig. 31 the upper row is hemstitched loosely, to show the method (see also Fig. 34, p. 114, for hemstitching). The lower edge of the diagram is not hemstitched; if the threads are woven in closely it is not always necessary to do so, although a line of stitchery is an improvement—it softens the edge and adds to the appearance of the weaving (see Chapter V.).

Method of working Fig. 31 :—Withdraw the threads of the material for three-quarters of an inch wide, and of the desired length; cut the weft threads at one end and the corresponding threads at the opposite end. If the bar is long, correctness of line may be ensured by pulling and tightening a single thread on the upper and lower edges—these will indicate the exact spot for cutting them without risk of mistake. Take a fairly long thread of wool and a blunt-pointed tapestry needle; a loose but regularly-woven canvas is the best material to work on to begin with, and wool or flax threads give the best results. The threads are easily seen and counted, and there is not the same chance of their being dragged or over-tightened. Secure the thread by running a few stitches on the under side; bring the needle up between two groups of threads; pass it alternately over one group and under the other until a piece the size of the chequer wanted has been filled in. As the needle passes to and fro it should press down each row of weaving closely together; this has the same effect as the “comb” which the weaver uses to press down the weft threads of his fabric. The first block being finished, pass to the next two groups by carrying the needle over and under as before, and

Insertions in Needle-Weaving

pressing down each row with the needle; the second compact mass will then be woven as in the diagram. To reach the next block, slip the needle down the back of the second chequer; this will bring it into position to work the lower block. Continue in this way to the end of the row, always passing the needle—at the back—through the group of woven threads to get into position for the next block.

Reversible Needle-weaving.—These chequers may be worked in slanting rows, or they may form a vandyke pattern, ascending and descending in a series of little steps; the V-shaped spaces between at top and bottom of the line may be filled in with another pattern or with rows of chequers in a contrasting colour. Both sides of the patterns are alike, and when the beginnings and finishings of threads are neatly done it may be reversible. This is one difference between needle-weaving and tapestry-weaving; in the latter the work is done with the wrong side or back of the pattern uppermost; it shows the starting and fastening off of threads, as well as the passing of threads from one part to another, all of which makes the one side unpresentable.

Another Pattern.—Some simple insertions may be worked by varying, slightly, the arrangement of the groups. Begin as in Fig. 31, but weave over three groups of threads instead of two; having arrived at the centre, carry on weaving over two more groups to the right and include the last group of the block just darned, to form the beginning of the new block. By repeating these groups of three alternately at the top and at the foot, always using the last of the previously darned block

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as the first of the next, a pretty little pattern is formed—a central cluster of threads is left between each block, which may afterwards be oversewn with a contrasting colour, or left with the warp threads of the material exposed. A very open and particularly effective insertion for a hem is made by working over two groups of four threads each—three or six strands of thread in each cluster if preferred. Begin exactly as in Fig. 31, at the left lower corner, and weave to the centre ; then take in one more cluster and weave in with it the last one of the previous block ; work to the top ; slip the thread down to the centre ; weave over two clusters, adding one of those previously woven with another group ; continue in this way to the end. By adding a new cluster to the one already in use the threads are pulled further apart, and a wider opening between the groups is the result. With these few suggestions, the worker will find that she can arrange and vary these insertions to suit her material and her own taste.

Filet Background.—Small squares, ovals, circles, or indeed any shaped space may be filled in with a net or filet background, then darned in with a simple pattern. The usual way of opening a square or oval (Plate X.) is to button-hole the form round the outside, then turn the work on to the wrong side and cut the horizontal threads at the edge—near the button-holing ; draw and cut again at the opposite side these same threads. The whole of the space is cut and divided up ; a bar of threads is left between each of the open spaces, always leaving the same number of threads between each three or four, and cut and draw the next three or four. When the

Insertions in Needle-Weaving

horizontal threads are cut and drawn, cut the vertical ones in the same way; when these are finished, begin to oversew each line, with one stitch into each hole backwards and forwards, until each line, horizontal and vertical, is oversewn. Care must be taken to make all oversewn stitches lie the same way. Note—the preparation of the background is done on the wrong side. Little geometrical shapes and patterns may now be darned in. As said above, the number of threads left in between these open spaces may vary; the fewer there are, the more open the squares will be. The result of this cutting and pulling of threads is a net background which can be worked in many different ways. The usual method is to oversew all the horizontal lines first, taking care to let the stitches lie the same way in each row; turn the work half round to oversew the remaining lines in the same way.

There is another way of making an open background which might commend itself to those who are averse to removing the threads, that is, by cutting the material which forms the background into narrow strips and oversewing the bars. It should be marked off in double horizontal lines rather less than an eighth of an inch apart; place these double lines at regular intervals about half an inch apart; rule them in chalk or pencil, then mark off the half-inch spaces into vertical lines an eighth of an inch apart; these vertical lines are then cut two or three at a time with a sharp pair of scissors and oversewn one by one in rows, overseaming the upper and lower horizontal bars by the way.

Very charming needle-woven bands can be arranged

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for different purposes by button-holing squares or oblongs, cutting and withdrawing four threads each way and leaving eight between. When a square is button-holed—with twenty-eight vertical and horizontal threads in the enclosure—there will be four solid squares connecting nine open ones, that is, one open square in the centre with the four solid squares at each corner, and the open ones surrounding them. Each solid square has eight single threads surrounding it; divide these into two groups by interweaving four threads under two and over two. When finished, there will be two woven bars connecting each side of the small squares with each other and with the outer button-holed square. These woven bars could occur at regular intervals among the more solid needle-woven portions.

Many very charming things may be made in this way with woven threads. These primitive patterns can be worked with ease in such varied forms, alone or as adjuncts to embroidery (Plate VI.), that an inventive needle-woman can ornament in rich colours, or without the aid of colour, many interesting pieces of work, provided she takes care to weave regularly and keeps her design simple and suited to the material.

“ Point de Réprise ” or Darning Stitch.—Fig. 32 shows an insertion worked on a foundation or trellis. This stitch, which may be used as a filling for open spaces or for the decoration and joining of two edges, is an interesting one, and most effective when worked. In cottons, wools, or silks it could be applied to many different purposes quite suitably; worked on linen with silk or flax threads, it might provide a dainty insertion

Insertions in Needle-Weaving

for some article of personal wear; worked in wool, it could decorate simply collars, cuffs and bands for a dress or jumper suit. Fig. 32 gives merely one form with the method of weaving, but there are many others to which the woven pyramid is applied. It is much quicker and simpler in execution than the button-hole pyramid, which is firmer but much more tedious to work—the former, too, looks well in wools and thick threads, while the latter requires lace thread. Woven pyramids are frequently used by point lace workers; this



FIG. 32.

is called by them "*point de reprise*," and applied to the fillings of circles and leaf shapes where the little cone-like forms work in very appropriately. The foundation of Fig. 32 is a double line of faggoting in Russian stitch; a single line is worked first; the stitches are taken widely apart, then a second row is worked between the spaces of the other, so that a series of little diamond-shaped spaces are formed as in Fig. 25. Begin at the edge of the braid and weave the pyramid from the base so that the points may meet at the centre; be careful to weave an equal number of threads into each cone-like shape, or they will vary in size.

Pyramid Insertion.—An insertion of alternate pyra-

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mids, with the bases at the centre, is more open and does not take so long to work. Make a foundation of faggot stitch, a single row this time, then carry the thread to the point of one of those stitches and weave over two threads to the centre. As these little cones should always be worked from the point, carry the thread to the top of the braid by overcasting the faggot thread; weave again towards the centre; when finished, the bases of the pyramids will form a central line.

An equally simple insertion and quite as effective is to work the pyramids in button-hole stitch on to each faggot thread. After forming the foundation stitches—the trellis—begin at the point as before, and work two button-hole stitches on each side before crossing over to the other side; otherwise it is worked exactly as the former pattern detailed above. Two rows of faggot stitch may be used for the foundation of quite a number of different woven patterns. Little rosettes or wheels are formed by five threads; at the junction of the stitches—at the centre of the space—are four threads; add another by carrying a central thread to the first group; work the rosettes over the five threads in a similar manner to Fig. 54, weaving the threads in and out; when finished, slip the needle under the finished rosette to the next intersection of the stitches and work the second rosette and so on. Descriptions are always tedious to follow—the best way is for one to work with needle and thread while another reads the directions aloud.

Interlacing Stitch (Fig. P, Plate II.).—This interesting insertion stitch is one which will well repay the worker for her trouble in mastering it. Although not a compli-



A NIGHTDRESS CASE (See p. 128)

An Interlacing Stitch

cated stitch, there are little points to be noted in the laying of the foundation threads which, if omitted, prevent the interlacing threads from working in properly.

Fig. 33 shows a diagram with the method of laying the foundation stitches :—One row is worked over the other ; this lattice work supports the interlacing threads, which also require two rows to work them. Fig. P shows the insertion completed. At a casual glance, Fig. 33 appears to consist of two rows of herring-bone stitch, the

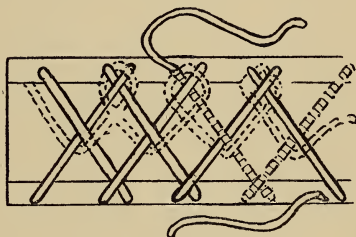


FIG. 33.

one superimposed upon the other ; but if a short line of herring-boning is worked and compared with the diagram the difference will be noted at once. In working the foundation, let the threads lie loosely on the surface to allow for the interlacing threads.

Method :—Secure the thread at the left lower line ; take a short horizontal stitch, three-quarters of an inch to the right on the upper line. Note—place the thread under the needle when drawing the stitch through ; this keeps the working thread under the diagonal stitch just formed. Cross to the lower line, and three-quarters of an inch further on take a horizontal stitch, but this time the thread is not kept under the needle, as it comes out on top and lies over the last diagonal. Proceed in this way until the end of the row is finished, then compare carefully with the diagram. Make sure before starting the second row that all the diagonal stitches beginning

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at the left of the upper row pass under those crossing from right to left ; this is achieved, as said above, by keeping the thread under the needle on the upper row. The first row of the lattice being finished, start at the left of the upper line and work in the same way as before ; cross to the lower line, and take the horizontal stitch exactly beneath that of the previous row ; then slip the eye of the needle under the thread of the diagonal stitch and take the horizontal stitch on the upper line with the thread under the needle. Working in this way, little diamond-shaped spaces are formed. With the completion of the second row, it will be seen that the stitches are all interlaced over and under each other with the utmost regularity. For the inter-threading of the pattern, take a long thread and a blunt-pointed needle ; the thread only enters the material at the starting and finishing of the work. Secure the thread at the left in the middle of the space between the upper and the lower lines ; if an open insertion, it must be secured at the top. In Fig. 33, the thin dotted line represents the interlacing thread, which passes over and under the little crosses on the upper line and down to the crossing at the centre ; thus the first row of interlacing threads are all worked on the upper half of the foundation stitches. When the end of the line is reached, turn the thread round the last central cross and return, interlacing the threads on the lower half of the herring-bone foundation. Note, in passing to the centre of the line, that the threads interlace regularly with those of the upper row, as they must pass to the upper side of the central crosses. By this time it will be seen how beautifully these threads fit into

An Interlacing Stitch

one another, but should any little mistake have occurred in the foundation stitches—the supporting lattice work—the equal and regular inter-threading will be found impossible. The thread must be chosen to suit the size of stitch—the foundation threads are practically covered. In Fig. P they are shown rather too clearly at the edges ; also in Fig. 33 the interlacing thread is not in proportion to the size of the lattice work, but a little practice will soon show the worker the size of thread suitable for a border ; a half-inch border requires a good stout thread to fill the space—too thin a thread will make the insertion rather poor in appearance, while too thick a thread will make the interlacing difficult to manipulate. This insertion looks well with all types of threads, therefore it can be used for many purposes. For making decorative hems for household linen it is most useful, and gives one quite a pleasant change from the usual hemstitch ; it is also more practical, because much more durable. No threads are withdrawn ; a single fold of the material turned over to the front surface is the preliminary ; this is firmly secured by the two lines of herring-bone stitch. Large decorative initials could be worked with the same stitch ; placed in the centre just below the hem, they would look very well—it would be better to draw these out on squared paper for the first trial, one or four squares to each cross, according to the size of the initial wanted. The insertion could be used for many purposes. In some of the old German linen work of the fourteenth century this stitch is applied to household linen—in geometrical patterns to borders, insertions and corners, where it looks very appropriate ;

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they are worked with white thread on white linen, but there is no reason why they should not be embroidered on a coloured linen—blue would look very effective worked in white threads or *vice versâ*. At a later date, some of the Eastern countries adapted this stitch to their own type of work and design, conventional flowers being carried out with admirable effect in coloured silks. The worker would find this adaptation rather difficult unless she had done a fair amount of line work.

Cosy Cover.—Plate X. illustrates a piece of work suitable for everyday use. It is a washable cosy slip worked in white linen with a pattern in braid. In this example the braid is flexible enough to take the curves of the design easily; it is tacked on, as previously described in the nightdress case (Plate XI.), on the outer edges, and gathered up with tiny oversewn stitches on the inner, to make the curves lie nicely. The design is very simple; it is made up with French braid in varying lengths formed into curves at the corners; the ground is of white linen. The braid is sewn on in blue cotton with a small button-hole stitch; the little daisies of loop stitch and the surface filling of the centre are also in colour. The open web in the centre is a simple lace stitch worked in button-holing.

Method.:—Cut away the linen (see description, Plate X.); work round the opening a row of button-hole stitch not too closely set, then work ten loose loops similar to Fig. 54. Catch the last loop of the circle into the first to join; then on the last-formed loop work six button-hole stitches; pass the next loop; work six button-hole stitches again into the following loop—the third;



THREE HAT BANDS. (See page 129.)

A Cosy Cover

proceed in this way to the end of the row. Work on in continuous rows until the centre is reached ; each group of pyramids must have one stitch less in each row as the circle becomes smaller. Finally, at the apex, the thread is twisted once round each loop ; carry the thread to the edge of the material by overseaming the edge of the first pyramid ; finish it off on the back of the linen. The square mesh for the open-work is prepared as described on p. 127. The open-work clusters of the background may be grouped differently from those in the illustration, where they are oversewn horizontally and vertically. Quite a pretty variety would be to work them in diagonal lines securing each cluster with a knot stitch.

Method :—Start the thread at a part on the left where a definite oblique line may be laid. Work a stitch with the thread under the needle, through the stitch and tighten the knot ; carry the thread obliquely to the next cluster and repeat the knot. Another method is, after preparing the background, to fill up the spaces with four open loops of button-hole stitch ; work each loop into half the cluster of surrounding threads—the other half is used in working the adjacent square ; in other words, the open square is filled in with four little loops, the needle being passed through the first loop to join it with the last before passing on to the next square, and the clusters of loose warp and weft threads are divided and pulled apart by the loops, leaving a little oval-shaped opening. The edges of the cosy are worked round with loops (see Fig. 57). These finish the sides and serve as a means of lacing the two halves together. This manner of finishing makes for simplicity in the washing and ironing.

CHAPTER XI

FRINGES AND TASSELS—HAND-MADE BRAIDS— KNOTS AND PICOTS

“And bid them that they make them fringes in the borders of their garments.”

FRINGES are used to form an ornamental border for various articles ; they seem to be the most natural finish to many of the loosely-woven textures. They can be knotted in different ways into simple or elaborate patterns, or they can be enriched with groups and bands of coloured threads or beads. The most simple are those produced by the unravelling of the horizontal or weft threads. In planning out a piece of work to be finished off with a fringe, allow 6 or 7 inches for it—or whatever depth is wanted ; finish it after the rest of the work has

been completed, as the frayed edges are apt to get soiled and untidy if unravelled before.

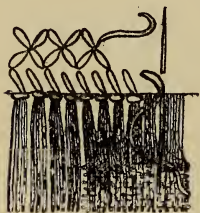


FIG. 34.

To prepare a Fringe.—Withdraw a few threads at the head of the space and work a row of single hemstitching, or overcast it with large stitches. There is only a single ply of material, but this stitching, while giving firmness, adds a decorative value and prevents the loosening of the weft threads. Fig. 34 explains the

Fringes and Tassels

method of hemstitching ; if the strands or warp threads look rather poor and thin, additional weight may be given to the whole by darning in either some of the weft threads, which have been removed, or by adding various coloured ones.

Fig. 35 shows one way of adding threads. These are fixed into place most easily by means of a crochet hook.

Method :—Wind the thread round a piece of cardboard sufficiently wide—that is, almost twice the depth of the required fringe ; cut the threads along one edge of the cardboard, and the strands are ready for use.

Put the hook into the material near the edge from behind ; lay the loop of the doubled length of thread on the hook and draw it through, then slip the two ends through this loop and tighten (Fig. 35).

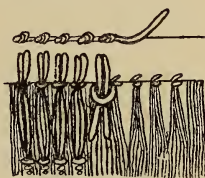


FIG. 35.

Many pretty variations may be made by adding beads or narrow ribbons, tassels or knots (Plate VI.). Those tasteful finishing touches add greatly to the appearance of the work.

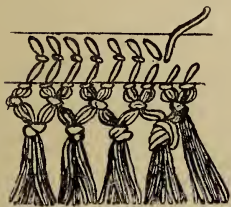


FIG. 36.

Knotted Fringe.—Fig. 36 has the strands in groups knotted together, then divided and knotted again. These knots take up a fair quantity of thread, thus the length allowed for the fringe must depend

on the number of rows of knots, as well as on the coarseness or fineness of the thread used. The thicker and

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firmer the texture of the strands, the greater the length of thread required for the knots. The method of making the knots being shown in the figure, it needs little explanation. After the first row of knots is formed, the second row is made up of the groups of threads hanging from these knots—they are divided, and half a group is taken from the right and left respectively. Three or four rows may be added in this way, each succeeding row of knots coming between those of the row above.

A Flat Knot.—Fig. 37 gives a flat knot used in fringe-making by macramé workers. At one time (in the sixteenth century), priests' vestments were frequently trimmed with this handsome type of fringe, consisting chiefly of knots grouped into various patterns. It was then known under the name of "*punto a gruppo*"; later it was called macramé, from an Arabic word meaning ornamental fringe or trimming. The Genoese used it for the trimming of bridal dresses. These knots can be added directly to a hem, or worked over a cord.



FIG. 37.

Method.—Arrange the thread in groups of two double strands, as in Fig. 37 *a*; take the two outside strands, and passing the left one under the middle strands, and the right-hand one over them—these middle strands meanwhile being held taut between the second and third fingers—bring the left-hand strand out, as Fig. 37, and the right-hand strand under so that their positions are reversed. Complete the knot by crossing the reverse

Fringes and Tassels

way again and tighten to finish. Quite a pretty fringe can be made by working a row of four of these flat knots in succession over four strands, one knot below the other ; the second row has the knots made on four strands—two strands taken from each of the groups immediately above—this brings the knots of the second row alternating with those of the upper row, as in Fig. 36.

Twisting and Crossing.—Fig. 39 gives a little hand-made braid, very useful for many purposes, for small headings, or for finishings, edges, or seams. It is a simple plait made with four strands of any firm thread or narrow braid—the latter is the more suitable for embroidery. Lace plaits similar to this require bobbins and a pillow, as well as a suitable lace or linen thread ; but the gimps for embroidery can be made quite nicely by fixing the knots to some firm foundation and winding the cord, string, or braid on to a piece of cardboard. The plait is done by means of twisting and crossing. These terms are used in the making of pillow lace. “Twisting” always means passing the right-hand strand over the left (Fig. 38 A), and “crossing” means the passing of the inner left-hand strand over the inner right-hand strand (Fig. 38 B).



FIG. 38.

Hand-made Gimp.—Fig. 39 shows the braid in process. Each pair of threads is twisted once, then the inner threads are crossed ; this is repeated to the end, care being taken to keep all threads as equal as possible. Fig. 39A is the same braid with picot edgings. These picots may be placed at every second loop instead of

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every fourth as in the figure. They are made with the help of pins fixed into the foundation ; the outside thread



FIG. 39.



FIG. 39A.

is passed round the pin before twisting with the next strand.

To make a Lace Pillow-Cushion.—Fig. 40 is a still more elaborate braid, consisting of five double strands. It could be more easily worked on a cushion—a large pin-cushion tilted against a table would do, or the worker could make a pillow-cushion for herself, such as some lace-makers use, in the following way : Cut a piece of firm cotton or linen about 20 or 22 inches wide and 22 to 24 inches long ; join up the length by the machine ; hem the two ends and run a drawing string through them

Fringes and Tassels

to close the ends. Cut two circles of cardboard 4 or 5 inches in diameter ; draw up one end of the pillow and place a circle of cardboard in against the closed end ; fill the cushion with bran or cork—such as is used for packing grapes—horsehair, or sawdust ; stuff tightly ; then place the other circle of cardboard on top and tighten up the second end by means of a strong cord run through the edges. This little cushion can be placed into a wooden box or basket, which is better to be weighted a little to keep it steady. Some pillows are made like a cylinder and fitted into a box, which is higher at the back than at the front ; others are made with an axis which is fitted into grooves cut in the side of the box ; this enables the worker to turn the pillow and also allows the lace as it is worked off to fall behind into the box.

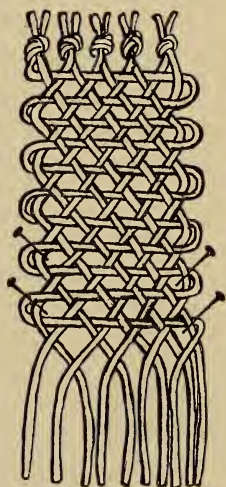


FIG. 40.

Braid.—To work Fig. 40, fix on to the cushion in a straight line five lengths of braid, knotted as in Fig. 38.

Method.—Twist the first and second pair once ; cross ; twist the second and third pair once ; cross ; twist the third and fourth pair once ; cross ; twist the fourth and fifth pair once ; cross ; place a pin at the right-hand edge ; twist the fourth pair once ; twist the fifth pair once ; cross ; twist the third and fourth pair once ; cross ; twist the second and third pair once ; cross ; twist the

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first and second pair once ; cross ; place a pin at the left-hand edge ; twist the first pair twice ; twist the second pair once ; cross, and repeat from : twist the second and third pair once ; cross, and so on for length required. This braid when worked with bobbins and a stout linen thread will be excellent for teaching the method of making grounds for some of the simpler pillow laces.

Simple Tassels.—Fig. 41 gives a small tassel.

Method :—Take a piece of cardboard, rather wider than the length of the finished tassel, and wind some wool rather slackly round it, twelve to twenty times, according to the size and thickness of the tassel to be



FIG. 41.

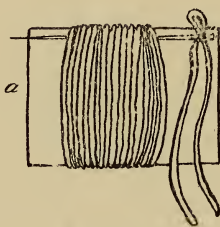


FIG. 41A.

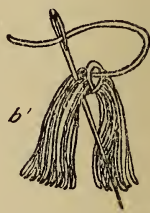


FIG. 41B.

made. Take a long large-eyed needle with a doubled thread ; slip it through the wool close to the cardboard ; pass the ends through the loop and pull firmly to tighten. Cut the wool at the opposite edge of the cardboard. Pass the thread through the centre of the bunch of wool and knot it two or three times to form a padding for the head. Sometimes a wooden bead helps to fill out the head, the needle being passed through it to keep it in place ; after which the thread is knotted. Figs. 41 and 41B give the making of the neck of the tassel. Take a

Fringes and Tassels

needle with a double thread and wind it round the neck two or three times ; pass the needle through the loop, then up the centre of the head and out at the top—here another bead adds to the appearance of the finished tassel—the ends serving to attach it to the embroidery. A much more elaborate finish may be made by button-holing the head of the tassel, beginning at the neck and working in rows towards the top. If the tassel is large enough to admit of it, a crochet-covered top, beginning with a chain and working upwards, is very quickly made ; long chains ending with beads may finish the lower part effectively. Plate VIII. shows simple tassels made in this way—those on Plate I. are rather more elaborate.

Needle-made Picots (Fig. 42).—This edging requires a good stout thread, linen, twisted silk, wool, or fine string, according to the purpose for which it is required. It may be worked on a braid, a cord, or the edge of the material. There is no great difficulty in the working of these picots, but absolute regularity of the loops and knots is essential—in order to secure this, a mesh, or if that is not to hand, a pencil may be used to keep the loops uniform in size. After some practice, the worker will probably dispense with a mesh and use a pin to keep the loops in place while making the knot.

Fig. 42 shows the method of working. Fasten the thread securely and take the first stitch, which is of the button-hole type, with the thread under the needle ;

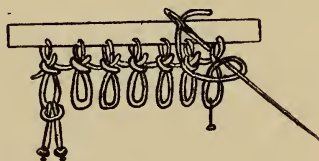


FIG. 42.

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then slip the thread round the mesh, passing it behind and bringing it out over the front of it; put the needle behind the loop (see Fig. 42) and twist the thread round the needle, over and under it; pull through and tighten the knot. If a pin is used, pass the needle behind the first little loop, then put the pin into position—a quarter or half an inch below the edge; pass the thread round the head of it; make a loop round the point of the needle and tighten.

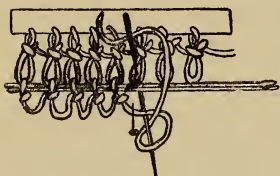


FIG. 43.

Fig. 43 shows the same edging with an additional row worked over a narrow braid—several threads could be substituted for the braid.

Button-holed Rings.—Button-holed rings are useful. They are generally made over a foundation of soft threads, which serves the double purpose of padding and strengthening them.

Laces, Edgings, Central Fillings.—Danish needleworkers use these rings a great deal as foundations for making both laces, and edgings, also central fillings. The former they apply to their beautifully worked embroideries as insertions or finishings; the latter have some arrangement of grouped stitches worked round a button-holed ring, then sewn on to the parts prepared for them. They use a ring stick, which is graduated in such a way as to enable them to make rings in several sizes, also to make any number in the one particular size



FIG. 44.

Ornamental Knots

desired. Rings are quite simply made. The thread is wound round the stick six to ten times, according to the size of the ring, and a stitch or two of button-holing is worked before removing it ; then work round the threads until it is complete and finish by passing the needle through the head of the first stitch and slipping it inside—and along the line of strengthening threads ; cut off neatly. Rings may have pyramids worked round them, in which case a definite number of button-hole stitches should be made. If a ring is covered with twenty-eight button-hole stitches, four pyramids of six stitches each could be made, with one stitch between each pyramid ; with thirty stitches, six smaller pyramids, with one stitch between each, could be worked in.

Rings could be made over a metal or bone foundation when they are used to support any weight, as for the draw strings of a bag, or to attach a splasher to a wall ; for lacing or connecting the front or shoulders of a jumper or child's frock they can be either made on threads or metal rings.

Note the interesting method of applying rings in Plate XIII. ; see also Fig. 23 *b*, which shows method of working rings with picots of bullion stitch.

Very useful indestructible buttons can be made of very thickly padded small rings in which the stitches practically fill up the centre ; twisted bars, crossed, should be worked at the back for the purpose of attaching these buttons to the garments which they are to adorn.

Ornamental Knot (Fig. 45).—Knot work, like embroidery and lace, seems to have originated in the East.

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All of the following knots may be worked more simply from the diagram than from the description.

Fig. 45 is commenced at the top or foot, where the **X** is marked. The braid is joined there under the curve; it is formed of one piece of braid, and can make a very good centre for a cushion, applied in a coloured braid, if sufficiently enlarged. It could have a decoration within the curves of conventional flowers, or, on the other

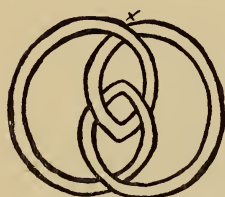


FIG. 45.

hand, it might be enclosed by a narrow geometrical border. It could also be worked in chain, couching, or oriental stitches instead of braid.

Weaver's Knot (Fig. 46).—The weaver's knot, used by all weavers for the joining of warp threads—warp threads are worked with the weaving—is a well-known knot. It is illustrated in Fig. 46 and consists of two loops interlaced; when finished, one loop has the ends crossed while the other has the two



FIG. 46.

lines lying parallel. It can be easily followed from the figure. A simple method of tying it is to take the end of the new joining thread and form it into a loop with the threads crossed; note that the short end is under and pointing to the left, and the long upper end is pointing to the right. Place this loop between the finger and the thumb of the left hand and hold it upright; take the end of the working thread in the right hand, and putting it from behind up through

Ornamental Knots

the loop, pass it round between the thumb and the first finger, under the short end of the new thread and over the long one, down into the upright loop again. Tighten the ends of both threads.

The Carrick Bend (Fig. 47).—This knot is simple and ornamental. It could be used quite successfully for embroidery and braiding. It is used by sailors for tying hawsers. To arrange the knot take one piece of narrow braid or cord and form it into a loop on the table ; cross the ends—the under and shorter one points towards the worker ; take the second cord in the right hand and pass it under the complete curve of the loop in a diagonal direction (see Fig. 47) ; passing then over the long and under the short end, enter into the loop and pass it under the diagonal line and out over the loop. This knot looks well—tighter or looser according to the width—when placed at intervals on a border and connected by lines of stitches.



FIG. 47.

The Reef Knot.—This knot varies slightly from Fig. 46. It forms a rather neater one than the weaver's knot and is also more ornamental.

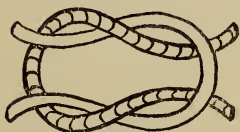


FIG. 48.

Method:—Make a loop as before at the end of the new thread. Hold it upright between the thumb and the first finger of the left hand, but do not cross the ends ; take the end of the working thread and pass it up through the loop from behind : put it round between the thumb and the finger, under the two ends of the held thread,

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then down through the loop again ; draw up both pairs of threads. The reef knot, as its name indicates, is used by sailors for tying the reef points of a sail.

Fig. 49 shows a knot which may be made of braid or of two rows of cord, on a larger scale, or it may be worked in chain stitch as a smaller knot. When made in narrow braid or cord the second cord is laced through after the knot has been formed by the first cord. This knot could be used for a border, placed at regular intervals with lines of cords connecting the one knot with the next ; to fill up a corner the central loop could be made larger. It looks well when worked in chain stitch or in couched lines.



FIG. 49.

The Chinese Knot (Fig. 50).—This knot, used for the ornamentation of a sailor's collar, is made of one cord. One loop is made long enough to pass round the neck, under the collar. Used as a part of the border design the end loops may be made as long as required to fill the space. The Chinese knot makes an ornamental fastening for anything that might require it. To make it, start at the X ; from there it can be easily followed from Fig. 50. It takes the form of two hearts reversed and interlaced ; the outer loops are formed in the process.



FIG. 50.

Fig. 51 is made up of two pieces of braid. The crosses

A Nightdress Case

show where the ends disappear under the curves. This knot could be used similarly to Figs. 45 and 49.

Knots are not generally used in embroidery for the starting or finishing of threads, but sometimes a new thread has to be joined directly on to the old one, in which case a firm, non-slipping knot is necessary. Figs. 46, 47, 48 are all useful for joining threads.

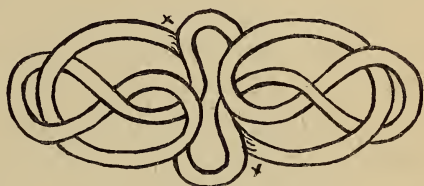


FIG. 51.

Nightdress Case in Blue and White.—Plate XIV. shows a charming and useful nightdress case in white linen, embroidered in white and blue flax. The simple interlacing design is laid on in white French tape, which develops into leaves at the centre and corners, and gives scope for a pleasant change in stitchery. The braid is fixed in place on the outer edge by a button-hole stitch worked in flax thread over three strands of blue. The material is cut and turned in and button-holed—this gives a little raised edge and accentuates the outer line; the inner edge is marked out by a line of back stitching (Fig. 13), and French knots worked in blue (Fig. 22). The spaces between the interlacing braids are worked in a filet or net pattern—which is simply worked but rather tedious on account of the necessary preparation.

Method.—Remove four vertical threads and leave four of the linen; repeat this within the space; then remove four horizontal threads and leave four; repeat. These little groups of threads are kept closely together

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by means of overcasting stitches—which should be done with a very fine thread—worked in rows over the warp threads, then over the weft. The linen in the centre of the leaf forms at the centre and corners should be cut, turned under the braid and button-holed, as described in Plate XIV. The outer ones are filled in with button-holed bars, which may be worked as described in Fig. 24, or they may be inserted after the button-hole edge is finished, by laying two or three strands, button-holing them, and overcasting three or four stitches along the edge to carry the needle into position for the next bar. The opening in the centre is worked in pyramids and bars, alternately (see description of Plate XIV.). It will be seen that the two outer leaves of the centre group are worked in a weaving stitch which gives the appearance of mid-rib and veins.

Method :—After the inner edge is button-holed, carry six threads to and fro from point to base to form the foundation ; then weave by passing the thread over three and under three strands until the point for the first vein is reached. Press the threads closely together with the needle to make the line solid ; then carry the working thread across to the edge to and fro and back to the edge ; weave into and out of these three strands until the mid-rib is reached again ; weave a couple of threads into the centre rib, then form the vein on the opposite side in the same way, and proceed in this way until the base is reached. The stitch must be very evenly worked and well pressed up by the needle continuously to get the right effect. The inner leaves are worked with a row of open button-holing, after which button-holed loops (Fig. 59) and pyramids are arranged



A BAG IN CANVAS AND WOOL. (*See page 153.*)

Hat Bands

to fill up the space. The braid-like appearance of the inner border is obtained by working a row of herring-bone stitch to form a foundation ; a long flax thread is then interlaced as shown in Fig. 25. See also border to Plate XIV. This interlacing thread is worked in, row after row, until the desired thickness has been got. In Plate XI. the foundation stitch is in blue and the interlacing in white flax thread—the little blue points of the herring-bone stitch peeping out on either side give a pretty effect. Two rows of fine chain stitch (Fig. 1) finish the dainty border.

The outer edges following the curves of the braid are worked in open button-holed loops (Fig. 59) which in Plate XI. are done with the needle ; but this edging may be done more simply, if desired, with a crochet hook, by forming a row of chain loops, then covering them with double crochet stitch (see p. 157 for description).

The edging of needle-made loops is, of course, preferable to any other, but in these days, when most of the household linen must go to the laundry, these little crochet edgings might quite suitably be worked directly on to little mats, table-napkins, and many other articles. They are quickly worked and wear excellently.

Hat Bands.—The illustration shows two hat bands, both of which might be made in a colour to go with a hat or suit.

A Flowered Hat Band (Plate XIIa.).—Plate XIIA. consists of a piece of cotton—celtic canvas—about 5 inches wide ; the length will vary and must depend on the shape and size of the hat. To make a similar band, prepare a fringe about half an inch deep on one side

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only ; turn the fringed edge over the plain one and tack into position ; crochet two lines of insertion (Fig. 65) in wool or in any material preferred. Make the flowers as in Figs. 66 and 67 ; those in the centre of the illustration are made up of three separately worked flowers, the smallest one is in silver tinsel. The large flower groups are placed on the band alternately with the smaller sprigs. For the making of the leaves see Fig. 68, p. 160. This band may be made in a very short time ; it is a very suitable hat decoration for rough weather, as rain does not destroy either the foundation or the crochet flowers.

A Velvet Hat Band with Cross Stitch (Plate XIIc.).

—Cross stitch, so little used nowadays in this country, except for the marking of household linen, seems to have been well known from a very early date by all needle-workers. It, and many other varieties of a similar nature, was worked on canvas or linen in patterns where the threads were counted. At one time these embroideries were so characteristic of the various countries that their origin was generally recognised by the pattern and the colour in which they were worked. The Italian cross stitch, embroidered on a very fine linen, was mostly done in a reddish-purple, and frequently worked in a two-sided stitch. Red, blue and yellow were the predominating colours of the Slav, Hungarian and Swedish peasantry. Very large pieces, destined for wall hangings, were worked in tent stitch or cross stitch, in designs suggestive of those used for tapestry weaving. These have even been called tapestries on that account. The famous Bayeux tapestry represents an

Hat Bands

interesting series of events of English history from the accession of Edward the Confessor to the death of Harold at Hastings ; it is worked in coloured wools on linen canvas : this is, of course, not really tapestry ; a true tapestry is formed by the interlacing or weaving of warp and weft threads by means of a needle or a shuttle (see chapter on needle-weaving).

Plate XIIc. shows a dainty band made on velvet ribbon ; the quaint little basket of flowers in cross stitch on a gold-coloured foundation may be worked quite simply on to any material, but in order to keep the rigidity which is characteristic of the stitch it is necessary to have a piece of fine canvas as a foundation. The ribbon is tacked on over it, and the design is worked over the two materials. In the case of velvet this method is reversed, as the pile is always an obstacle in the way of accurate sewing. The canvas is laid on top of the velvet ; the cross stitch is then easily worked and the threads of the canvas are removed, one by one, when the work is finished. The centre piece of Fig. C is of gold-coloured velvet worked in this way. It is caught down on the outer edges by gold tinsel threads, couched closely to keep them in position ; the strips of orange-coloured velvet applied on either side and peeping through the stitchery give a gay little touch to the panel, which is finished off by lines of gold thread and two little gold beads. The strips of decoration at equal intervals are somewhat similar, but not so elaborate. No cross stitch is used except in the front.

Much may be done with canvas stitches, provided they are applied to designs which are treated in a

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conventional manner. The form of the stitch, occupying a square space, would enable the worker to make out patterns on squared paper ; chair seats and cushions could be worked very satisfactorily in geometrical designs.

Baskets and bags, worked on canvas in wools, cottons and raffia, can be very useful ; the canvas should always be worked with a thread which fills the mesh. For fine embroidery it is often better to work it in a frame, particularly for fine cross stitch or petit point, or when worked over two plies of cloth—the frame prevents the under cloth from puckering.

Some of the darning stitches, too (Plate II.), could be applied successfully to bags ; if small, they could be worked in silk on a fine-meshed canvas. Cross stitch requires no description, except that it is worked in two rows ; this allows the threads of the second row—on the return journey—to cross over those of the first. A quick method of filling a line is to work a half-stitch over a stretched thread.

Tent Stitch or Petit Point—the finest of the canvas stitches—is, like the first half of the cross stitch, worked over a single thread of canvas.

Goblin stitch is worked over one vertical and two horizontal strands. A close herring-bone stitch looks well alternating with rows of an upright stitch for a canvas-made basket in various colours.

There are many other canvas stitches, but varieties will be easily constructed by the worker. Canvas may be bought with a single or double thread, of a coarse or fine quality. A wide-meshed canvas of a stiff quality,

Hat Bands

used for rugs, is very satisfactory for the making up of work bags or baskets with raffia.

A Braid Hat Band (Plate XIIb.).—A hat band or collar made from remainders of braids is illustrated on Plate XII_B. The original was made as a collar to wear with a suit, but it looked so fascinating as a hat band that it was worn as such. It is a perfectly straight band and the illustration shows very clearly some of the insertion stitches already mentioned (see Figs. 25 and 29). Prepare it in the manner already described for the braid collar (Plate IX.). Cut a piece of brown paper to the size wanted and tack the braids upon it. In the illustration three rows of black skirt braid, with a row of black chenille in the centre, go to form the foundation. The upper and central rows have a line of blue braid laid over them, just close to the chenille. Join the braids with faggot stitch on the one side (Fig. 25) and a knot stitch (Fig. 29) on the other. The knot stitch is in turquoise blue wool, the faggot in jade green with a stronger green interlaced. The lines of bright blue braid are connected at one side and the edging (Fig. 30) is worked over the other. This edging has a thread intertwined with it so that the loops are connected, instead of being detached as in Fig. 30. When all the braids are connected the paper is cut away from the back.

CHAPTER XII

DRAWN-THREAD AND WHITE WORK—RHODIAN, RICHELIEU AND HEDEBO

“ Be rich in patience if thou in goods be poor.”

MANY of the pretty delicate lace stitches which look so complicated when worked in fine lace threads, on a net or cambric foundation, can be used with admirable effect for the filling in of spaces and the covering of surfaces of some of the coarser stuffs ; worked in wools and thick threads they lose their filmy and lace-like appearance, and can be adapted quite nicely to the more utilitarian articles. The arrangement of the stitches may be chosen to suit all kinds of materials ; they may be very open or only partly so, but as a rule, the simpler these surface stitches are, the better they look. The main idea being to bring the background into tone with the rest of the work, the worker should choose a stitch which will have just the amount of colour to give the right tint or shade to the material. Diapers are also commonly used to tone in the background ; single spots or groups of spots, which may be represented by French knots or bullion knots, flower or leaf sprigs worked in loop stitch, and all simple types of darning may be requisitioned for the purpose. Interlacing patterns can frequently be made up of two or more stitches combined,

Drawn-Thread and White Work

and may often be invented on the spur of the moment by the interested needlewoman. There are endless varieties to be made out of button-hole stitch, which is the foundation stitch of most needle-point laces (Figs. 53 and 11). Weaving stitch—interweaving of threads—is another upon which many laces, needle-point and pillow, are built up (Figs. 32, 62, 17 and 40). These two are often combined (Figs. 54 and 55); add to them darning stitch, both simple and patterned, and we have got one step towards lace-making. But lace-making is not for the busy woman or householder, who has her day fully occupied, but rather for the few who possess skill, good patience, and many unoccupied hours—these must belong to the woman who would excel in the art of producing the delicate fabric. It is most interesting to trace the development of lace; how needle-weaving of the more simple, primitive type later became drawn-thread work or openwork, in which finer threads and materials were used; under the skilful fingers of the inhabitants of the convents works of exquisite skill were produced, vestments and hangings, all destined to ornament the church. In England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries lace came into general use, and was worn in great profusion by Queen Elizabeth and her Court. Fine steel needles were made in England during this reign. Naturally this must have had some effect on embroidery, but the change does not appear to have been noticeable. Linen was embroidered in silk in various colours, and further ornamented with drawn work. This drawn work was followed by cut work, and from these we have the origin of lace. These first

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laces were of two kinds : Lacis and Cut Work. They were heavy in texture and suited to the costumes of the period.

Lacis.—In lacis the background consisted of a network of squared meshes upon linen on which a pattern was darned in linen thread, coloured silks, or gold threads ; it was worked usually in large pieces, for coverlets and bed hangings, curtain borders, and altar cloths.

Cut Work.—Cut work had the background at certain parts drawn, other parts were cut away and the edges button-holed. Probably this stitch was invented for the purpose of protecting these cut edges. This darned netting and cut work, *point coupe*, were often combined on the one piece.

Reticella.—The next step, of course, was to work without a linen foundation. The threads were arranged in a frame, on a foundation which was only there to hold the threads in position while they were worked into various patterns, and filled with button-hole stitches. All the laces of this period were geometric in design—squares and circles combined with cut work, drawn work and embroidery. It was not until about the end of the seventeenth century that these gave place to flowing lines and more elaborate and complicated workmanship with a net background.

Some of the earlier peasant embroideries are singularly interesting. There is a personality and a quaintness of thought combined with those spontaneous designs, a brightness of colour so instinctive, and an inventiveness of method so freely displayed that one has only to see the embroideries to realise their charm.

Drawn-Thread and White Work

The art and craft has passed from generation to generation. Some nations are distinguished by the exquisite skill with which the work is executed, others by the multiplicity of colours; the patterns predominating are mostly of the geometrical type. Some of the sixteenth and seventeenth-century Italian drawn work (*punto tirato*), in which the weft or warp threads were removed; *punto tagliato* (cut work), in which both the weft and warp threads were cut away, leaving only connecting bars of the linen, are inspiring to the needlewoman of leisure.

From these embroidered and cut-linen works reticella and needle-point laces arose.

Hedebo Embroidery.—The embroidery done by the peasantry of Denmark is worked almost entirely in button-hole stitch, on a firm linen ground, and with a coarse linen thread. (The Danish women always wear a little shield of metal when they are working on the second joint of the little finger to protect it—the constant friction would be apt to cut the finger otherwise.)

It is an exceedingly durable type of embroidery or lace—for it partakes of the nature of both—and is simple to work. The designs are mostly of the geometrical type, consisting of squares, circles, ovals, etc., worked in button-hole stitch, arranged to form borders, corners, or centres for table and bed linen. By combining other embroidery stitches with the button-hole stitch many charming pieces of work might be produced without much difficulty. Many of the Danish peasantry earn their livelihood by means of this beautiful work.

Plate XIV. illustrates the corner for a panel for a

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pram or cot coverlet in process. The centres of the forms are all worked in the typical hedebo work, while the outer parts are filled in with a variety of stitches. To prepare the simple design, make a series of squares and circles in paper and connect them with double lines ; arrange and space them symmetrically. Leave sufficient space between each circle to allow for the surrounding stitchery (see chapter on design). Then, when finished, draw directly on to the linen with compasses or any small round shape ; leave sufficient material for a hem or border. The linen should be of a good firm quality. Use a sewing needle—No. 6 scientific sharp—and a lace thread—Taylor's Mecklenberg, No. 6, or Knox's two-cord linen lace thread, No. 25 or 30, are suitable.

Method :—To prepare a circle, outline it with two rows of tacking stitch, keeping most of the thread on the surface by lifting a tiny stitch of linen. Tack the piece to be worked over *toile cirée* or over a stiff piece of brown paper ; with sharp pointed scissors snip a small piece out of the centre of the circle, and by the warp and weft threads, cut up almost to the edge to allow the material to be turned back quite close to the edges of the double row of tacking, about six cuts to the half-circle. Begin to work in the following way :—Secure the thread at the edge nearest the worker by running it along the outline for a short distance—knots are never used—and bring it out on the surface ; hold the material so as to be able to work towards the centre of the circle—that is, away from the worker ; make the first stitch by inserting the needle from underneath ; draw up the thread until there is only a small loop left ; put the needle through the loop

Drawn-Thread and White Work

from underneath and tighten with a jerk of the thread. Repeat these stitches, but not too closely, round the circle, turning the material under as the work proceeds ; finish with the last stitch into the first loop. The button-hole stitches should not be worked either too closely or too tightly—about six or seven stitches to a quarter of an inch. The inner row is worked in open button-hole loops (see Fig. 52), one loop into the head of every fourth stitch ; this can be strengthened by working back along the top, one stitch into each loop. A close row of button-holing, or, if preferred, another row of open button-holing, should be sufficient to fill the circle. Carry the thread down over the first button-hole loop, which is a single thread, and secure it at the back of the linen.

The centre filling, composed of groups of three loops and pyramids, is worked as in Fig. 59. The working of continuous pyramids is described in connection with the cosy slip. Isolated pyramids are worked in a slightly different manner. Starting from the left, work seven button-hole stitches into the heads of the seven stitches surrounding the open space ; overseam back to the left ; work six button-hole stitches into the previous row ; overseam back ; work five button-hole stitches and overseam back, when there is only one stitch left ; overseam down the right side of the pyramid ; this brings the needle into position to work the next group of loops. When all pyramids and loops are finished, pick up a pyramid and a loop alternately with a button-hole stitch into each ; overseam one stitch into each loop, then down the side of the last-made pyramid ; fasten off at the edge.

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The flowers in Plate XIV. are worked down the outer edges in blue and white linen embroidery thread. The stitchery used can be fairly well seen from the illustration. The largest flower in the corner has a row of eyelet holes, made at equal distances to finish the hedebo centre; the space is further ornamented with open button-holing (Fig. 53, Plate X.) in blue. This stitching should be commenced at the centre; the final row is worked into the linen and headed by a line of back stitch in white; a line of chain stitch in blue finishes the flower. The flower on the left has a waved line of closely set French knots, filling up the space, followed by a row of chain stitch in white. The little outer spaces between the curves are filled in with oriental stitch (Fig. 18); these alternate with French knots worked in blue. The flower on the right is filled in with loop or petal stitch, and finished with a double row of blue knots.

Rhodes embroidery is rather different from the other peasant embroideries. It is less varied, and so it is more monotonous and less interesting to work than many of the openwork or drawn-thread varieties. It seems to be of very ancient origin, and though it has been brought into prominence lately, under different names, it is only a revival of the old form of needlework done by the people of the Isle of Rhodes and adapted to modern methods. The old work was done on hand-made linen; the background was worked in red and the design left in the linen, with an outline stitch to define it; it was thrown strongly into relief by the colour of the worked background.

Drawn-Thread and White Work

“Punch Work.”—In America this embroidery is known under the name of “Punch work.” It is much used as dress trimmings and for bed linen and table wear ; as the fabric is not weakened by the withdrawal of the threads, it stands wonderfully well for articles of daily household use.

The linen should be loosely-woven so that the warp and weft threads can be gathered easily together without puckering the work—if hand-made, so much the better ; a linen working thread, strong but fine, and a thick needle are required so as to separate the strands of the material. Special needles may be had from needlework depots at 1*d.* each. The strong fine thread draws the clusters together and yet does not fill up the open spaces which are a feature of the background. Fig. M, Plate II., gives an idea of how the stitch is worked, but in the figure the working thread is cotton, and each group of five threads is gone over twice, so that the open spaces are rather smaller than they would be if a linen thread had been used. When the material has been chosen and the design traced on, fix the work on to a drawing-board, and with a ruler mark off the dots in rows one-eighth of an inch apart ; note particularly in starting the first row of dots, that they are in a perfectly straight line—with the warp or weft of the linen ; this is very important, as the work will not look well unless care is taken in marking these dots. If the warp and weft lines of the material are easily followed without strain to the eyes, these dots need not be marked, but in many cases it is better to have a guide of some sort, particularly when fine linen or muslin is used. Another method of

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marking in the pattern of dots is to use an open canvas as a guide ; this can be placed over the linen and fixed with drawing-pins at the top ; the dots can be marked with a knitting needle or traced at regular intervals through the threads of the canvas with a sharp-pointed pencil. The only difficulty in using the canvas is that the lines of warp and weft of the linen are hidden, so care must be taken to make both materials correspond, otherwise the dots will be off the straight line and the work will prove most unsatisfactory when finished. Some workers prefer to do the outlining of the design first and the background afterwards, others reverse the process—much depends on the worker herself ; the background can be kept free from puckering by placing the work in a frame.

To work Fig. M.—Tie the thread to begin with ; bring the needle out at the first dot of the top left-hand corner ; put it down through the dot to the right ; pull the three or four strands together and repeat this horizontal stitch to tighten ; pass the needle diagonally under to the second left-hand dot—exactly under the first ; make an upward stitch into the first dot ; pull strands together ; repeat stitch and tighten—this brings the needle to the surface again with one horizontal and one vertical stitch completed. Repeat these two stitches to the end of the row. These stitches should form three sides of a square, the fourth side being added with the second row.

When the edge of the space is reached, turn the work round so as to be able to work from the top down, as at starting. Make a little stitch to keep the thread firm,

Drawn-Thread and White Work

on the wrong side, then bring the needle out at the dot to the left ; put it down through the previous hole—horizontal stitch ; repeat ; take a vertical stitch, putting the needle down into the previous hole, and, completing the square (Fig. M), repeat ; pass the needle diagonally under the material to the next dot, and so on. When a very fine material is used the groups of threads may be held together by a single stitch instead of a double one. This background may be worked in a different way, all the horizontal stitches being worked first, and then the whole turned half round and the vertical stitches, which are now horizontal, worked next. This may commend itself to some, being rather a simpler method ; it is done entirely in horizontal stitches and needs no description after studying the first method. After the background is finished the design may be worked in with satin stitch, chain stitch, outline stitch or button-hole stitch. This should be done in the hand.

Richelieu Embroidery.—Richelieu embroidery—another of the embroideries worked in button-hole stitch—is even simpler in execution than Danish work, as the material is not cut away until the button-holed bars—which connect the pattern—are finished. It is worked in the hand, generally over a piece of *toile cirée*—American cloth specially made for embroidery. The entire design is outlined in small tacking stitches with embroidery cotton ; the bars are then worked in—they always have picots, which is characteristic of Richelieu work. For the working of bars see Fig. 24, and of picots, Fig. 57. Care must be taken to secure the ends of the bars, by passing the needle through the linen to

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the back and making a stitch, before running the stitches along the outline to the point for the making of the next bar. The design is then button-holed all over in equal-sized stitches; the flower centres are worked in, and finally the linen is cut away very close to the button-holed design with a sharp pair of embroidery scissors.

Edging: Point de Bruxelles (Fig. 52).—This Fig. 52, which consists of a piece of Honiton braid with an edging, shows the working of one of the most elementary of the lace stitches. It will be seen at a glance that it is the familiar button-hole stitch worked in loose

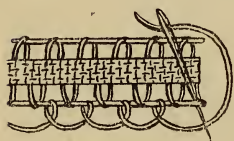


FIG. 52.

loops; to lacemakers it is known as *point de Bruxelles*. It is a stitch constantly in use with them as it forms a good foundation net, and charming patterns may be made with it when worked in rows, backwards and forwards. *Point de Bruxelles* is frequently found in laces of different types as it may be worked closely or openly to suit various styles and designs. The stitches are worked into the loops of the previous row; sometimes a strengthening thread is stretched from right to left, in which case the button-hole loops are worked from left to right over this thread, as well as into the loops of the upper row. There are many beautiful varieties of patterns for covering spaces or openwork fillings to be made from this simple foundation stitch, by varying the grouping of some and duplicating others (Fig. 53). What is known as double-net stitch has two button-hole stitches worked into each of the loops of the previous row. When used as a surface stitch worked in coarse

Drawn-Thread and White Work

threads the loops may be fairly loose, provided care is taken to keep them regular in shape and size. For those who are not expert a frame is helpful or a piece of stiff glazed calico or brown paper—either might be utilised to keep the material stretched.

As a filling for an open space they should be worked much smaller and closer in a linen thread, the size mainly depending upon the opening to be filled in.

Point de Sorrento.—In this (Fig. 53) there is a pleasing variety of the same stitch. It also has a special name among laceworkers—*point de Sorrento*, although only varying slightly in the arrangement of the loops from *point de Bruxelles*. It is used principally for the filling of open spaces and is comparatively quickly worked. Good results, too, can be had by filling in large spaces with woollen threads of the twisted type. In the first row the stitches are taken rather closely together but equally distributed in the second row; one stitch is worked into the last loop of the first row; one loop is missed; one stitch into each of the two following loops, and so on across the space. The pattern starts on the left side and is worked to and fro, the third row, therefore, starts from the left again with one stitch into the smaller loop and three into the wider loop.

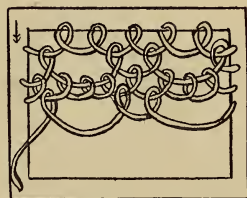


FIG. 53.

Fig. 54 is rather a favourite pattern, but the making of the small wheels or roses is just a little tedious. The foundation is a row of looped button-hole stitches,

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similar to Fig. 52, worked into a circle of braid or a row of not too closely worked button-holed material as described on p. 138. If the circle is small, another row added to this and drawn up by overcasting the inner circle will often be sufficient. The little wheels take up quite a large space themselves, but where such elaborate stitching is wanted they look very effective.

Method :—After the row of open loops has been made, overcast a single stitch into each loop and draw up the



FIG. 54.

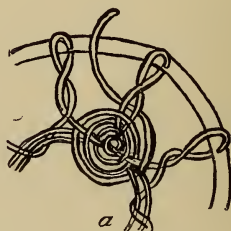


FIG. 54A.

thread to tighten the circle; the first row of open button-holing should be nicely spaced to leave room for the forming of the little wheels. The little wheel-like forms are woven in and out of the connecting stitches as is clearly shown in Fig. 54A. Another method of filling in a circle is as follows :—Make a row of open button-holing as Fig. 52, spaced widely, so that there may be eight or ten loops in the round. This done, draw them up by overcasting one stitch into each loop; then carry the thread back to the edge of the braid at the starting point of the first button-hole loop—this is necessary to complete the first loop, the last half of

Drawn-Thread and White Work

which, so far, has only got one strand. Add two more threads to this half-loop by carrying the needle to the centre and back again; this acts as a strengthening or padding thread to the half-loop, which has now to be button-holed from the outer edge to the inner circle. Each loop is worked in the same way, always adding the padding threads and starting the button-holing from the braid, and from there working towards the centre. When each loop has been worked, button-hole round the inner circle with the heading towards the outer ring; slip the thread up through the first bar and finish off neatly.

Fig. 55 gives a simple method of filling in a square opening with a circular form. It is not so complicated as one might suppose. Start at the lower left-hand corner and lay the threads for the square; then the first diagonal line is stretched across to the top right-hand corner; overcast it back—in the method shown in the diagram—as far as the centre only. From this point—the

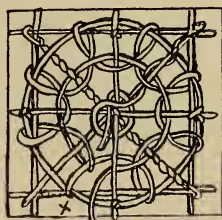


FIG. 55.

centre—each thread is laid in succession to the edge—vertical, diagonal, horizontal, each one in turn—and overcast back to the centre; when the circle is complete, overcast the second part of the first diagonal back to the edge. The loose button-hole loops are then worked, two into each side of the side and the thread, passing round the first incomplete loop, is interlaced round the inner circle to strengthen and tighten it (compare

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Fig. 55). Now complete the first button-hole loop ; make the final outside circle and finish off the thread. If the filling looks rather thin when finished it may be solidified by working a row of close button-holing round the inner circle.

This stitch is an interesting one and rather less used than the common *point de Bruxelles*, on account of the initial difficulty of keeping it quite regular ; a little practice very quickly gives facility to a careful worker.

A Netting Knot (Fig. 56).—The knot is similar to that used for netting. In working an open space as in Fig. 56, it will be found of considerable aid—towards the equalising of the loops—if horizontal lines are drawn on the foundation material. The loop may be fixed with a pin into position, and the needle being inserted behind the loop of the upper row and the stretched thread, the working thread is

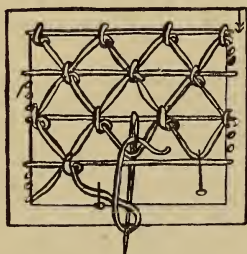
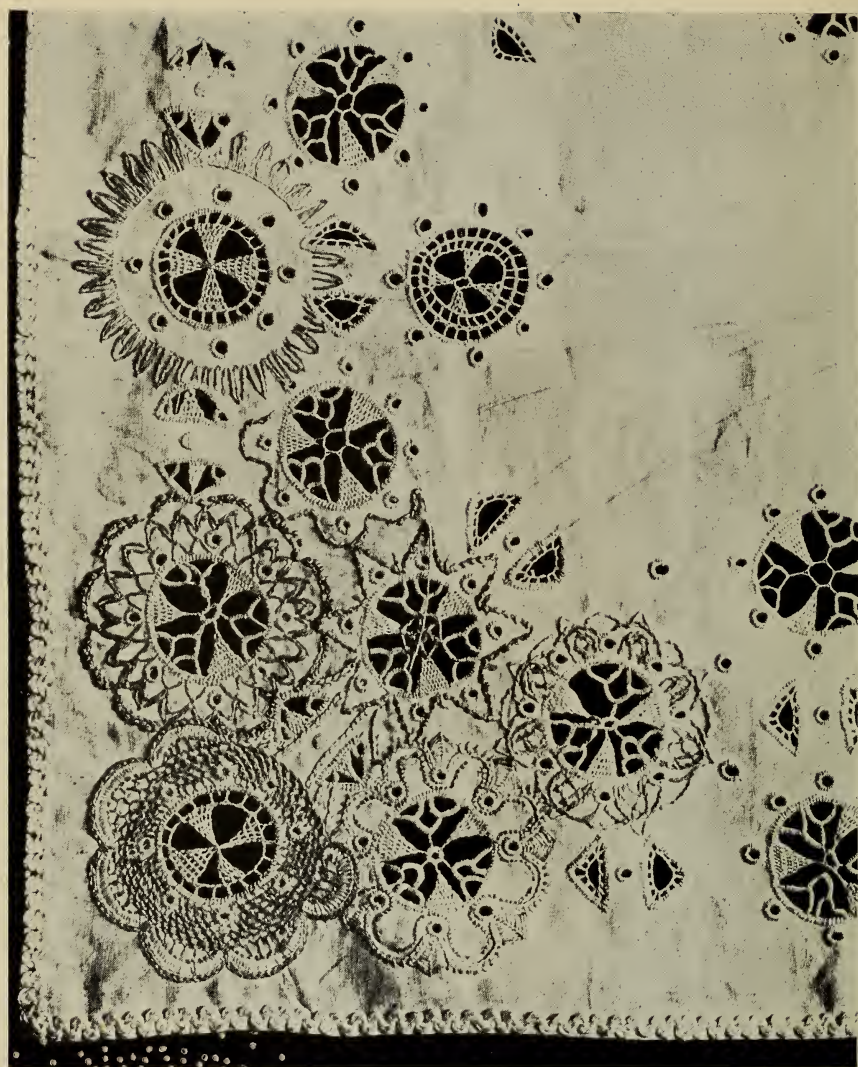


FIG. 56.

then twisted over and under the needle before the thread is drawn up. This stitch can also be worked without the strengthening horizontal lines, either in diagonal or straight lines. To work it diagonally, make the first loop in the left top corner of the square ; overcast a few stitches along the top to reach the position for starting the second row ; each loop is secured with the knot as in Fig. 56, their regularity and equal length being ensured by the pin which is stuck into the foundation.



CORNER OF COT COVERLET—UNFINISHED. (See p. 138)

Drawn-Thread and White Work

In netting, a knitting needle or small mesh is used instead of a pin.

Edgings.—A very dainty and durable little edging may be made by working this knot on to a coloured or a lace braid. In Fig. 30 the knot comes at the edge of the material, while with this *point Turc* knot the edge of the loop is knotted. If the loop in the edging in Fig. 30 is worked rather tighter, it also makes a very durable finish.

Picots (Fig. 57).—The little pin picot is occasionally used as a finish to a button-hole edging. It is rather ineffective, having only a single thread, which is apt to disappear after a little wear. Fig. 23 gives a much more substantial picot in bullion stitch.

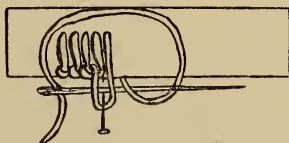


FIG. 57.

To work Fig. 57, button-hole a few stitches along the edge or bar as the case may be; fix a pin into the material or bar and pass the thread under it; take a stitch into the material; bring the needle out at the back; slip it under the three threads from left to right (see Fig. 57) and draw through. Make a firm knot close to the edge of the material, then continue the button-holing till the next point is reached.

Venetian Picot.—A more substantial picot is used in Venetian lace and embroidery as follows:—Make a connecting bar by stretching three threads across from one edge of the opening to the other, as in Fig. 26. Button-hole half-way across, then insert a pin as Fig. 57, but pass the thread under the pin and over the bar twice; then begin to button-hole the picot at the point

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where the pin is inserted and work five or six button-hole stitches till the bar is reached ; the point must be closely covered, then continue the button-holing of the bar.

Fig. 58, *a*, *b*, *c*, show how a solid little picot may be worked as an edging ; it should have some decorative



FIG. 58.

stitch to join up the picots, such as large overcasting, button-hole, chain or couching stitch. It is generally easier to work the picots with the edge held away from the worker.

Make a loop as at *a* ; fasten it with a pin ; then take the thread to the top of the loop and pass it round as *b*. Then interlace backwards and forwards, passing the needle under the thread before going over to the opposite side, *c*. Repeat four or five times until the loop is filled. A twisted thread of a fairly thick make is most suitable for these picots.

A Button-hole Edging. — Fig. 59 shows how to work an edging which is particularly suitable for household linen, table mats, towels, etc. ; being both strong and durable, it will stand the hard wear which household articles in daily use are subjected to.

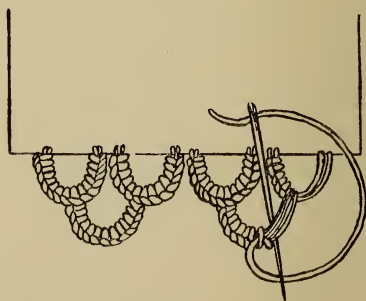


FIG. 59.

Figs. 60 and 61 are

Drawn-Thread and White Work

very good surface stitches, both of which make bold and most effective headings to a border or band of needle-weaving. Both depend considerably on the care with which the foundation stitches are worked ; if these are not equally distributed and the interlacing thread carefully adjusted to form the circles or links of the pattern the decorative value of the line or filling is spoilt.

A Border Stitch (Fig. 60).—To work as Fig. 60 three rows are required to complete the stitch. First

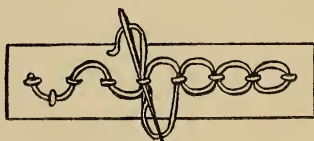


FIG. 60.

make a row of horizontal stitches on a level with each other ; then take a long thread and pass the needle, eye foremost, up under the first small stitch, down through the second, and so on, till the first row is finished—the second row of interlacing completes the link.

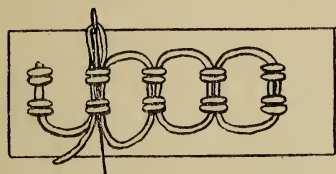


FIG. 61.

An Interlacing Border or Filling (Fig. 61).—The stitch may also be used as a background or filling, in which case the ground must

first be patterned over with alternating rows of horizontal and vertical stitches, equally spaced. The vertical stitches hold the lower and upper edges of the links together—one such stitch is seen on the left of Fig. 60. Fig. 61 looks well if the foundation stitches are worked in one colour and the interlacing threads in another. By looking at the figure it will be seen that four small horizontal stitches are required to support the interlacing

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threads, in groups of two. These must be equally spaced so that the rings may be equal in size. After the foundation stitches are worked proceed exactly as in Fig. 60. Take a long thread for the interlacing of the first row ; pass the eye of the needle foremost through the small stitches to prevent splitting of the threads ; follow by a second row, which completes the ring.

Fig. 13 gives a row of large back stitching with an interlacing thread which is worked in a similar way, and which makes a good firm line or heading to a border or hem.

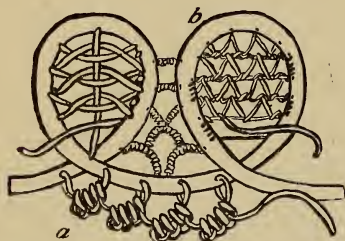


FIG. 62.

Two Leaf Fillings
(Fig. 62).—This filling for a leaf or oval form is quickly worked ; it may be used equally well for a surface stitch. Fig. 62 represents a

leaf with a lace braid for the outline. The central thread which forms the mid-rib is stretched first, the loosely worked loops are then threaded over this. This very simple arrangement looks remarkably well, and can be still further enriched by spacing the loops much wider apart, stretching horizontal lines across the spaces and forming little woven wheels, or rosettes, over them, down the mid-rib. This is, of course, a much more elaborate type of leaf, and would be used to fill quite a large space.

There are many simpler methods of filling leaf forms or oval spaces—a row of button-holing, *point de Bruxelles* (Fig. 52) worked round the inner edge, followed by

Drawn-Thread and White Work

one or two rows of looped button-hole stitch (Fig. 53), and closed down the centre by a line of faggot, or Russian stitch, finally overcasting a few stitches to the edge in order to finish off the thread neatly.

Similarly, Fig. 62 *b*, may also be worked either as a surface filling or as an open one. The horizontal lines are stretched first, then overcasting from left to right of the straight lines fixes these transverse threads; otherwise they would be apt to get out of place, as they are only threaded over the one line and under the other.

Point de Venise (Fig. 62 *a*).—This can be worked on to baby garments, or to any article where a dainty finish is required. It looks even better if the heading is of some of the lace braids. The thread is secured at the edge and a looped stitch is taken as a foundation thread into which are worked four button-hole stitches—to form a scallop. This charming edging is much used in *point de Venise*. The same stitch also makes a beautiful filling pattern.

A Useful Bag.—Plate XIII. illustrates what may be done with such simple materials as canvas, braid and wool. The foundation of canvas has the design traced on to the material; it consists of a series of little circles and half-circles, which overlap here and there, and which are eventually turned into gay little conventional flowers by means of bright-coloured wools. These flowers are mostly worked in petal stitch (Fig. 3A), and French knots (Fig. 22A). The band is enclosed by two rows of braid, oversewn with green, blue and purple wool. The foot of the bag is made up of an oval of braid worked in rows from the centre outwards; the

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tassels, also of braid, are brightened by rings and tags of wool ; little thin lines of tinsel threads are darned into the canvas—these serve to connect the embroidered band with the upper decoration. The embroidered rings which hold the draw strings are extremely pretty. This note of originality, and indeed, the whole bag, conveys to one's mind the impression of the bright personality of the worker who thus gives outward expression of the joy it gives her to work with her needle.

CHAPTER XIII

DECORATIVE FLOWERS AND LEAVES—EDGING AND INSERTION

“Take the gifts, too, to serve as monuments of my hand labour.”

THESE little flowers are a dainty trimming for hat bands (Plates IX. and XII.), collars, ribbon, ties and jumpers, for dress decoration, or as an addition to almost any article of daily wear : further, they are so simple to work that a very few directions will enable any one to make and apply them to whatever object may be chosen for decoration.

Crochet.—All crochet consists of a series of little loops made by a needle or hook, these being worked or drawn together in various ways to form patterns or designs suitable for edgings, insertions, motifs, etc., for domestic use, and innumerable articles of personal wear.

The foundation stitch is a chain, and all patterns commence with it—two or three or more, according to the article to be formed. Most crochet patterns are worked in rows, backwards and forwards, or all from one end ; in the former case, the work must be turned at the end of the row, after making two or three stitches to allow for turning ; therefore, the second, fourth, and sixth row, etc., will be worked on the opposite side from

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the first, third, and fifth, etc. When the rows are all started from the same end, the wool must be cut off at the end of each row, and commenced again at the beginning of the next. Crochet is worked, as in ordinary needlework, from right to left.

Chain Slip-knot (Fig. 63).—We will start then with a slip-knot, which forms the first loop for the chain (Fig. 63). Wind the wool once round the first two fingers of the left hand and pull the long end of the wool through the circle thus made in a such a way as to form a loop ; insert the hook ; pull both ends of the wool and tighten the knot sufficiently to leave



FIG. 63.

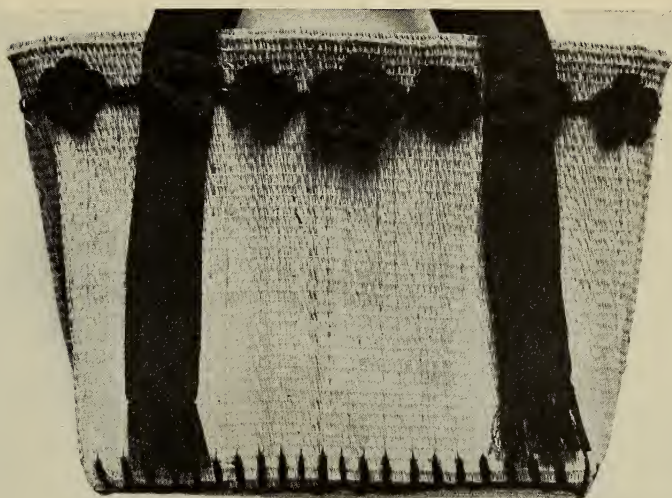


FIG. 64.

an easy passage for the hook through it. The next stitch is made by taking up the long end of the wool with the hook and drawing it through the loop. Repeat this process until the length of chain required has been obtained (Fig. 64). A little practice will soon give the regularity of stitch necessary.

Single Stitch.—To practise single crochet, make a chain about 12 inches long ; put the hook into the upper half-loop of the second chain ; throw the wool over the point and draw it through this half-loop and through the loop which is already on the hook. Proceed in this way to the end of the chain ; work one chain ; turn and work back again, taking care to put the hook into the upper half of the stitch of the previous row. Thus the first stitch of each succeeding row is always worked into the back of the last stitch of the preceding row.

A



B



TWO SIMPLE BASKETS (*See p. 169*)

Decorative Flowers and Leaves

Double Stitch.—Double stitch is not very different from single stitch. Put the hook into the upper half of the third chain from the hook, as in single stitch ; pass the wool over the hook and draw it through. There are now two loops on the hook. Pass the wool over again and draw it through these two loops ; continue to the end of the chain and turn as in single stitch.

Treble Stitch.—This stitch uses up much more wool than the two preceding ones. Begin by passing the wool over the hook, then insert it in the upper half of the chain already made ; draw the wool through and there will be three loops on the hook. Put the wool over the hook and draw it through two loops ; put it over a third time and draw through the two remaining stitches. That completes a treble stitch. It will now be noticed that for a single stitch the wool passes over the hook once, for a double stitch it passes over twice, and for a treble stitch it passes over three times.

Long Treble Stitch.—Long trebles are made by passing the wool twice over the hook to begin with, then working it by drawing the needle through two by two, always remembering to pass the wool over the hook, just as in treble stitch. When working trebles to and fro, four or five chain stitches must always be made at the end of each row before turning. When the work is turned, these chain stitches form, or rather replace, the first treble, which is skipped. This keeps the edges more regular.

Ladder Insertion (Fig 65).—Fig. 65 forms a useful little insertion or ladder on which to place the crochet flowers. It connects the groups and prevents the

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spotty appearance which would be rather a disadvantage if the flowers were scattered in arrangement (Plate XII.). It is very simply worked. Make a chain the required length, then add three or four stitches for turning, to

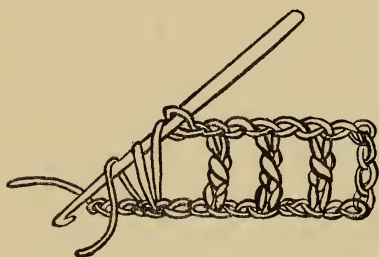


FIG. 65.

allow for the depth of the treble; insert the hook into the fifth half-loop, counting backwards, and make a treble stitch as described (p. 157); crochet one or two chain between each treble stitch to correspond with the number of chain stitches passed over.

Hooks.—In making the flowers, it is better for a novice to work with a bone crochet hook and wool; steel hooks are used for fine threads, flax, silk, or cotton, and are not quite so easy to manipulate as bone or wooden ones. The point of the hook ought to be quite free from roughness, as the wool or thread of any kind is so easily ruffled.

Flowers (Fig. 66).—To make the simplest flower, work five chain and join (Fig. 66 *a*). This figure is worked very loosely in order to show the method. Then make seven chain and one double crochet into the ring; five chain and one double crochet into the ring. Work in this way until



FIG. 66.

Decorative Flowers and Leaves

seven little petals have been formed, then join into the third chain; finish off by cutting the wool and pulling it through. Thread a needle with the cut end, and slip it down the chain to fasten off. This forms a tiny flower, which may be duplicated in various tones of the same colour and sewn on to the foundation with cross stitch or French knots. The sizes of the flowers will vary considerably according to the thickness of the hook and thread used, as well as to the method of working, but it is always better to crochet flowers firmly to keep them in shape.

A more elaborate Flower (Fig. 67).—Fig. 67 gives a slightly more elaborate flower.

Method :—Work six or seven chain and join by pulling the loop through the first stitch. To make the petals, work four chain; three treble stitches into the ring; four chain and one single or double stitch into the ring—this com-

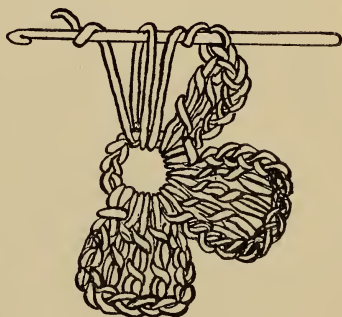


FIG. 67.

pletes a petal. Notice that the four chain at the beginning and end form the sides of the petal. Be careful not to split the wool while working, as this spoils the appearance of the flower. Make five, six, or seven petals and join at the ring as before.

If a larger flower is wanted, make a small flower as Fig. 66 for the centre, and work the petals into the openings instead of into the ring; the petals may be

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made fuller also by adding more treble stitches to each one.

Figs. 66 and 67, if worked in silk, cotton, or flax, make quite a pretty decoration ; the flowers may be folded into various shapes and an interesting touch of colour or a stitch here or there, or an outline of button-holing will add richness and variety to the work (Plate XV.).

Leaves (Fig. 68).—Leaves are quite simple to make, and, of course, will vary in size and form, just as the flowers do, according to the size of the hook and the thickness of wool used. A chain forms the mid-rib of the leaf, and into this double, treble and long treble stitches are worked up one side of the chain and down the other, the long trebles coming at the widest part and decreasing towards the tip.



FIG. 68.

Method. :—Make nineteen chain as a foundation ; work one single stitch into the second chain from the hook, one double crochet into each of the next two chain, one treble stitch into each of the next two chain, one long treble into each of the next eight chain, one treble into each of the next two chain, one double crochet into the next chain, three double crochet into the last chain. These three stitches form the tip of the leaf. Continue with one double crochet into the next chain ; on the other side of the chain a treble stitch into each of the next two chain, and so on—repeating the stitches as on the ascending side—to the end of the chain (Plate XII.). This leaf may be enlarged by working a row of double stitch all

Decorative Flowers and Leaves

round, while a smaller one may be made by starting with thirteen or fifteen chain and putting in fewer long trebles.

Wired Leaves (Fig. 69).—Another type of leaf (Fig. 69) is made with two lengths of covered green millinery wire—any wire will do so long as it is covered—which are tied together in the centre with green silk and then bent into the form of a leaf and fastened at the foot with silk or wool. The wire is then interlaced with wool, flax, or silk, or chenille, in green, blue, or any colour desired. As the weaving proceeds in and out, take care to push the rows closely together until the tip is reached; pass the needle and thread twice round the tip and slip the needle down the centre to the stem, where the thread is wound round and round until it is firm and a sufficient length of stem is covered.

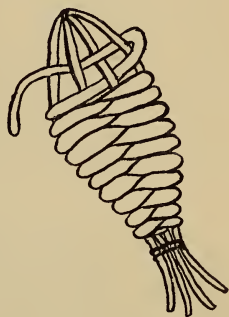


FIG. 69.

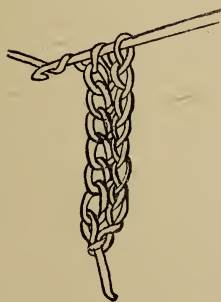


FIG. 70.

E.B.

Wired Flowers.—Flowers may be made in the same way, each petal being treated as a leaf; five or six are then tied together to form the stem, and French or bullion knots added in another colour—to give stamens and pistil for the centre.

A Useful Cord (Fig. 70).—Fig. 70 makes a very good finish for various purposes; it is a chain made with double stitch. Begin

M

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with two chain; put the hook into the first chain; pass the thread over and draw it through in a loop; pass the thread over again and draw it through the two loops on the hook; put the hook into the left side of the stitch just made; pass the thread over the hook and draw it through; pass the thread again over the hook and draw it through both stitches; continue in this way till length required has been worked. This little cord will be useful for bags, edgings for coats and jumpers and many other articles.

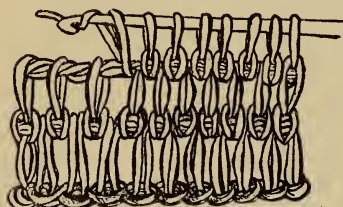


FIG. 71.

Tricot (Fig. 71).—Fig. 71 represents another type of crochet, sometimes called Victorian or Tunisian crochet or simply crochet tricot. It makes a firm, close, yet elastic piece of work, and is specially suited to the making of children's slippers,

scarves, bonnets, reins, braces, collars, hat bands, etc. It is always worked in rows—never in rounds—and a long straight hook with a knob at the end is necessary as all the stitches on the advancing row are kept on the hook and worked off on the return row—these two rows complete the stitch, which is worked on the right side backwards and forwards.

Tricot crochet is commenced with a chain the exact length and finished off with single stitch.

A Tricot Collar (Plate IX.).—The collar in Plate IX. is worked in Knox's linen "cord" floss thread. Make sixteen chain and work three rows of double

Decorative Flowers and Leaves

stitch to keep the ends from curling up as they would do if the tricot stitch was started right away. For the tricot, the loop row is worked thus:—Put the hook through the first stitch; pass the thread over and draw it through in a loop; put the hook through the second stitch and pass the thread over; draw through in a loop; continue in this way to the end of the row, when there should be sixteen loops on the hook. Put the thread over the hook and draw it through one loop; pass the thread over and draw it through two loops; keep on repeating this, passing the thread over and drawing through two loops until there is only one stitch left on the hook. These two rows complete the stitch. In the next row, the loop row, put the hook through the hole between the first and second stitches; pass the thread over and draw it through; pass the thread over the hook again and draw it through the first of the two loops on the hook; repeat to end of row, always putting the hook into the hole between the stitches; count the stitches at the end of the rows, as it is quite a common mistake for a beginner to increase or decrease by missing or making stitches.

The collar is finished with a row of single stitch right round, a deep picot fringe to the ends with flowers worked in Knox's linen "cord" floss thread in delicate tints edged with silver thread and placed in groups to give weight, interest and finish to the whole.

Picots.—Picots (Fig. 72) make a dainty finish for an edging of crochet, needlework, or lace. Collars, table mats and many small articles may be improved by these light points of various shapes; the one objection to them

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is that they lose in appearance after washing, and so are not suitable for rough wear unless substantially made.

Plain Crochet Picots.—Crochet picots are quickly and easily worked. For a plain triangular point, make six chain, then work one treble stitch into the first chain made, that is the stitch furthest from the hook. Repeat six chain and one treble into the first chain for the length required—the six chain form the little triangular points or picots, the treble stitch forms the heading.

Dropping Picots.—These dropping picots are a little more solid in appearance than the plain picots. Make five chain ; withdraw the hook from the loop and insert it in the second of the five chain stitches just made ; take up the loop dropped ; pass the thread over the needle and draw it through the two loops ; repeat with five chain ; drop the last loop ; insert in second chain ; take up the dropped loop ; put the thread over the hook and draw through both loops. Continue in this way for the length required.

Crochet Lace Picots (Fig. 73).—Lace picots, as the name suggests, are generally worked in fine threads ; nevertheless, they can make very effective trimmings if worked in wool or stout thread over a mesh, and will wear wonderfully well.

Two-chain Picots.—Commence with two chain ; put the hook into the first chain ; pass the wool over and draw it through the stitch—there are now two loops on the hook ; work two chain, then slip the loop nearest the end of the hook off on to a thin wire or mesh and repeat. Put the hook into the first of the two chain ;

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pass the wool over and draw it through the stitch ; work two chain and slip off the last loop. It is sometimes easier to withdraw the needle from the two loops instead of slipping the last loop off the end of the hook and to replace it into the front loop.

This edging may be sewn to a piece of work.

Picots (Fig. 72).—The following picot is worked directly on to the edge of the finished piece of crochet, or it may be worked into a length of chain and overcast to the edge of any article suitable. Put the hook into the first stitch ; pass the wool over and draw through ; work one double crochet (see p. 157) into the next chain ; draw out the loop to the desired length for the picot and slip it on to a mesh or pencil ; insert the hook into the horizontal stitch at the foot of the loop ; pass the wool over the hook and draw a loop through ; make a double crochet stitch into the next chain ; draw out the loop and slip on to the mesh ; repeat to the end of the work.

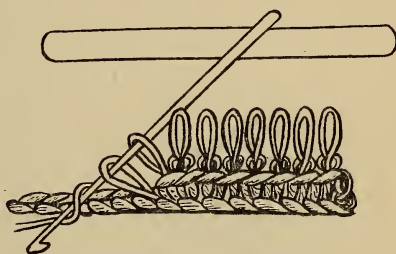


FIG. 72.

Two-pronged Fork.—A very quickly worked insertion, fringe, or edging may be made by means of a two-pronged fork. The little implement can be manufactured quite easily at home. For a fringe, a wooden fork is necessary, with one wide and one narrow prong. The usual fork is of thick steel wire and varies in size, but as steel wire is too hard for the unskilled worker to

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manipulate, a softer metal would be more satisfactory. A length of copper wire about one-eighth of an inch in diameter and 15 inches long, could be beaten into the form of a hairpin (Fig. 73) by means of a hammer ; if the metal is too hard to take the curve it can be softened by annealing it. The width between the prongs may vary in different forks according to the width of the insertion to be made, from half an inch to 3 inches apart

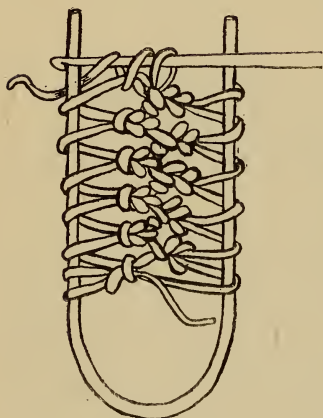


FIG. 73.

is the usual spacing. The stitch is made with a crochet needle, which will also vary in size according to the material used ; for working in fingering wool, three or four ply, a No. 1 steel crochet needle does very well. Cotton, flax, wool, raffia, string and metal threads, all may be worked up to form various useful articles for decorative purposes. An effective fringe

could be made by threading beads into the wool ; the beads could be kept at the edge of the wide prong.

An Insertion or Fringe.—Method of working :—This insertion may be worked in two ways. By looking at Fig. 73 it will be seen that the stitch is a very simple one. Make a slip-knot as Fig. 63, and one chain ; withdraw the hook. Place the fork with the prongs upwards in the left hand, between the thumb and the middle finger ; slip the chain stitch on to the left prong with the

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thread towards the worker. Insert the hook from below into it, then carry the thread round the right prong and pass it over the point of the hook; pull it through the loop; make one chain; put the thread round the left prong and turn the fork to the right—slipping the hook over the right prong at the same time so that it remains in the same position between the prongs with the handle to the worker; insert the hook into the stitch on the left prong from below; catch the thread and pull through; there are now two loops on the hook; close these by putting the thread over and drawing it through both. Repeat with the thread round the left prong as before.

Raffia.—A simple braid is done in three movements, the fork being turned between each three. When the fork is filled, closely covered, slip off the loops and reinsert the two prongs into the last five or six loops, then continue for the required length. Two or three braids may be joined together by slipping one loop over another, or a contrasting thread may be taken and two loops on the one side may be joined together by a double stitch; then make three chain; two loops on the other side, joined again, then three chain; working in this way, the joining forms a little row of vandykes in chain stitch. The outer edges are then strengthened by one double stitch into two loops; two chain; one double stitch into the next two loops; two chain, and so on.

Carpet and skirt braids may be joined together by means of an insertion made in twine or raffia—the latter being the more decorative. After making a row of gimp on a wide-pronged fork, connect it to the carpet braid by working two double crochet stitches into each loop

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and two into the braid—if a sufficient number of rows are joined together a strong and useful shopping bag may be made, finished with handles of plaited raffia and braid.

A pretty crochet edging suitable for finishing off many articles of personal wear or for domestic use, which wears and washes well, may be worked directly on to the material. Work a row of button-hole stitch into the edges of the material ; space the stitches rather widely so as to allow of an easy entrance for the crochet hook—this makes a daintier edging than inserting the needle directly into the material. It is worked in three rows—a linen thread gives the best effect. To work the first row, begin with one double stitch into a button-hole loop, then two chain, and one double crochet into every second button-hole loop ; on approaching the corners, work into every loop so as to allow the next row to lie easily round them—nothing spoils good work so much as to see the stitching tightened and strained round the edges and corners. When the first row is finished join the stitches with a single stitch and commence the second row. Make eight or ten chain according to the thread used and size of loop wanted, then work double crochet into every third or fourth loop of the previous row—give ease to the corners by working three double crochet into each loop at the finish of the row ; join as in second row. For the third row work ten or twelve double crochet stitches over the chain loops, as these stitches should cover the chain loops closely, when they look similar to button-hole stitching. The appearance of this edging will naturally vary considerably according to the size of the needle and thread



A CUSHION COVER.

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used. A very serviceable edging, not too minute, is made with a No. 4 steel crochet hook and linen "L.C." crochet thread, No. 14.

Another Edging (Plate VII.).—A very effective edging is worked into a row of needle button-hole stitch. Like the one above, it wears and washes well. First row: work one double crochet into one of the button-hole headings; make ten chain; pass six button-hole loops and work one double crochet into sixth loop; continue making ten chain and one double crochet until the row is complete. Break off the thread. Start the second row with one double crochet in the centre of the chain loop; make ten chain and work one double crochet into the centre of the next loop, and so on to the end of the row; then join and break off the thread. The third row is worked in a coloured thread. Take a blue linen or cotton thread and start this row by working into the first loop. Two double crochet, four chain, four double crochet, four chain and two double crochet. Work the same number of stitches in each loop. The chain stitches form little picots; this makes a dainty little finish to a table centre. Compare Plate VII.

Plate XV.B. gives an example of a work bag made from rug canvas. It is worked in cross stitch in two shades of blue, light green and a reddish-purple raffia. The edges are turned in and finished off with a border of soft blue brush braid; the handles are of raffia, plaited, in the different colours; the basket is lined with a printed silk which matches the various colours.

Plate XV. gives a Japanese basket woven in grass, trimmed with cherry-coloured braid and crocheted

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flowers—the flowers are sewn on with dark blue ; the lining consists of two shades of blue. The handles are of cherry-coloured carpet braid. These baskets are so very useful for the holding of odds and ends, mending, or embroidery. Some of the simplest woven Japanese baskets look very well when trimmed with braids in gay colourings and little crochet flowers. The busy woman might well have one of these useful little baskets with work ready to her hand, or suitable in their contents to her various rooms.

A Cushion Case (Plate XVI.).—The original is a charming piece of work. The background, of a soft blue tone, is worked in blues, bright greens, heliotrope and cream. The design, in straight lines and circles, has two bars of needle-weaving, the definite pattern of which is shown to advantage by the plain woven bars on either side. The bars are worked similarly to the latchet darns which are frequently used instead of rings to support the draw strings of bags.

The design is so simple that it might be drawn directly on to the material—this should not be a difficult matter if the threads of the canvas are regularly woven. Put in the main lines first—in the illustration these lines are worked in satin stitch ; use a ruler and a chalk pencil—the latter is easily rubbed out if a mistake is made—then run in the design in wool or thread. Measure off the bars for needle-weaving, but do not cut and draw the threads until ready to work them. Great care must be taken in planning out the various parts of the design to have all lines running accurately with the warp and weft of the material, otherwise, when the woven bars are

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put in, they will accentuate any mistake made. The corners are in "laid" stitch, that is, the threads are stretched loosely across from one side of the square to the other, horizontally, then vertically—or *vice versâ*; they are then sewn down at the junctions with tiny cross stitches, which requires some care if the squares are not to be displaced. The rows of running or tacking stitches accentuate the oval in the centre. Cut and draw the threads for the needle-weaving after the outer band of satin stitch has been worked. The plain bars should be worked in first, as they are simpler in construction. When these plain bars are finished, divide up the strands into groups of seven for the pattern, and one group of eight—the latter forms the start and finish of the pattern which should have four groups in each. Weave in all the purple blocks to begin with; these, as may be seen from the illustration, are widest at the base. Weave over seven groups for one-eighth of the space; leave out a group of threads on either side and weave over five; then over three, and then over one group; each step is fully one-eighth in height. This process is then reversed, and the weaving finishes at the opposite side over seven groups. The start and finish over four groups can be followed from the illustration. The central figures alternating in green and blue will then be woven in without difficulty.

The circles in the centre are worked in rows of satin stitch; the flat green beads are surrounded by French knots in cream, and each circle is surrounded on the outer edge by button-holing in blue of a lighter tint than the canvas.

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Useful Hints.—As a preliminary to the embroidery of a piece of work comes the putting on of the pattern. This may be done in different ways, but whichever way is chosen, it is well to realise from the outset that accuracy is essential. All possible care should be taken with the drawing on or tracing of the pattern or design ; all straight lines should follow the warp and the weft of the material, when they are visible—the slightest unevenness causes unnecessary trouble in the after-working.

Transferring the Design.—As previously mentioned, in a design for coarse canvas a geometric pattern may be put on with a ruler and a chalk pencil, but as chalk gives a thickish blunt line and is also very easily rubbed off, it is necessary to fix the design, either by running it round with a needle and thread, or by taking a fine brush and going over the chalk lines with Chinese white or oil paint thinned with turpentine. Another method is to lay a sheet of tracing paper over the design and trace it through clearly and accurately ; then, following the plan of the little ones in the kindergarten with their embroidery cards, lay the traced design, face up, on a pad of felt, or on two or three folds of woollen material, and prick little holes very closely together, along the lines of the design.

Pouncing.—A needle or a fine glass-headed steel pen will serve as a pricker. Lay the pricked design face downwards on to the material—which has previously been pinned on to a drawing board ; fix the tracing, and with a soft pad dipped in powdered chalk and charcoal rub lightly across the holes from left to right—keep

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always rubbing in the same direction ; on removing the tracing, the pattern should be perfectly clear. Take a fine brush and go over the design with Chinese white or red oil paint thinned with turpentine ; this is called pouncing. The superfluous chalk or charcoal will blow off.

Carbon Paper.—A simpler method is to use carbon paper, which may be had in yellow, blue and red. Fix the material on a board and place the design carefully and evenly on to it. Secure with drawing-pins at the top line—leave the lower part free ; raise the design—like a flap—and place the carbon paper, colour downwards, on to the material, then pin down the lower edges of the design. Do not put the pins through the carbon paper as they leave an ugly mark wherever pressure is applied ; thus rings and bracelets should be removed before tracing. The upper pins keep the design in position, and progress may be noted by removing the lower pins and lifting the tracing and the carbon paper without disturbing the position of the design.

Yet another way is to trace the design through on to a piece of tarlatan—an open-meshed muslin ; this being done, place the tarlatan over the material, take a drawing pen, and with Indian ink run over the lines already there. If this is quickly done, a clear line should show on the material.

Stretching. — Embroidery sometimes gets rather puckered while working. It can be much improved, not by ironing, which is apt to flatten too much, but by stretching. Simple needle-weaving with flat stitchery may be laid on to two or three folds of blanket and

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pressed without harm. For most other kinds of work it is better to lay it face downwards on a board which has already been covered with a napkin or a fine towel ; fix it at regular intervals with drawing-pins, and while doing so stretch the material into its right shape, if possible ; be careful not to stretch it out of shape, which would be worse than ever ; then lay a damp cloth over the work, leave it over-night to dry, and the puckering should have disappeared by the time it is dry.

There is really no need to pucker work if it is held properly. Some stitches are more inclined to tighten than others, but it is generally when working across the material that they tighten it. The work should always be held in a convex position over the fingers, and when working in wools—which are sometimes very elastic—the needle-worker should see that the threads lie easily over the surface. If the background appears rounded at the worked part on the under-side, the wools are too tightly strained. When mistakes are made it is always wiser to cut them out than to unpick—it does not harm the material in the same way, and it is not extravagant, as threads are generally too much roughened for use after unpicking.

Knots, as a rule, should be avoided ; threads should always be cut, not broken off. The best way to commence a new thread is to run a few stitches on the right side on a part which will be covered afterwards by embroidery. This keeps the wrong side tidier, and the threads more secure. A long thread does not make for good work, as a rule ; it gets roughened before it is finished and takes longer to pull through.

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Braids and thick threads can be taken through to the wrong side by making a hole with a stiletto, or by using a needle and thread. Bring the needle through the hole and pass it round the braid, then pass it back through the same hole and pull the braid through the hole with it ; in the case of a coarse thread, the needle will make a large enough hole. In working with flax, note the direction of the fibre by drawing it through the fingers. The needle should be threaded at the smooth end, so that when the thread is drawn through the material it is not roughened. In working with double wool, cotton, or silk, pass two separate threads through the eye—both threads are then running the same way. Always keep the finished part of the embroidery covered up while working, if possible ; it keeps it fresher and the threads do not get rubbed. Hot hands discolour the threads, roughened fingers ruffle them. Washing in warm water with the free use of pumice stone will help in both cases.

Washing Woollen Embroideries.—The soap should be of a good quality and free from alkali, which injures the colours. Flake the soap and dissolve it in boiling water ; whip it into a lather ; add cold water until it is of a comfortable heat for the hands, and put the embroidery in. Squeeze and work it gently—but on no account rub it—until it is clean, then rinse in warm water, and again in cooler water ; squeeze the water out ; hang up immediately—in the open air, if possible ; dry quickly and pin out on a board, and iron damp on the wrong side on a folded blanket. White work may be washed in a lather of Lux—any soap which does not contain alkali may be used. Proceed as for coloured work, squeezing the dirt out, not

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rubbing ; rinse and stretch over a towel or put in the open air till almost dry. It is then laid face downwards on several folds of blanket, a damp cloth placed over it, and a hot iron passed backwards and forwards until it is quite dry—the cloth prevents the iron from soiling the material on the back and equalises the moisture. Velvet should be held while being pressed, or the iron should be fixed face up and the velvet passed over it. All wools should be shrunk before being worked on to articles such as sash curtains and coverlets, which require washing. Steep them in a bath of hot water for some hours ; hang them up—in the hank—to drip ; when dry, they will be as soft as when new.

Braids should be subjected to the same treatment—they may probably lose a very little colour if they are not reliable of their kind.

Practical Hints about Materials.—There is sometimes difficulty in obtaining threads and materials of a coarse make and weave suitable for carrying out articles similar to those illustrated throughout the book. A short list of the names of firms where such may be bought is given below for the benefit of readers.

Canvases and crashes particularly suited to needle-weaving may be obtained from Messrs. Brown and Beveridge, Ltd., 194, Bath Street, Glasgow. These are of good quality, in great variety and excellent colouring.

Titian canvas, one of the heaviest makes, is very suitable for runners, table covers and large objects generally ; it may be had in three widths, 27 inches, 50 inches and 72 inches, in mole, blue and soft brown.

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Art canvas and antique canvas, both of a regular weave in quiet colours, are lighter in make.

In vandyke canvases the warp and weft threads, which are of different colours, blend very harmoniously. Art linens and bloom linens are charming; the latter are woven in two colours. Celtic canvas in cream, fawn, red, green, and a beautiful rich blue, are guaranteed fast dyed.

Cotton repps and Sundour unfadeable materials are also suitable and useful for household decoration.

Messrs. Brown and Beveridge, Ltd., also supply tapestry and crewel wools and a soft thick silk thread known as Tyrian embroidery silk.

Linens of different makes and colours can be obtained so easily that it is not necessary to mention any special firm. Heavy unbleached linen sheetings and towellings can be procured from some of the Irish linen manufacturers.

Messrs. Murphy and Orr, Donegal Street, Belfast, make a heavy twill unbleached linen to be recommended for coverlets.

Messrs. J. and J. Baldwin and Partners, Ltd., supply, through their various agents, wools and yarns of a soft quality and in excellent ranges of colour. "White Heather," three-ply, and a thicker "Rainbow" embroidery wool, sold in balls, are both good.

Fingering wools, three, four and five-ply, in light colours, may be had from any of the numerous Scotch wool shops—Messrs. Fleming and Reid, Greenock.

Messrs. W. and J. Knox, Ltd., Kilbirnie, manufacture linen and lace crochet threads in cream, ecru and Paris white, also linen floss embroidery threads in a wide

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range of beautiful colours. L.C. linen lace thread in various thicknesses, numbering from 8 to 70. The medium sizes from 35 to 50 are suitable for the background of Rhodian embroidery.

“Cord” floss, a thick twisted thread, is suitable for knitting; hats, collars, short jumpers, bags, etc., may be made from it.

Messrs. Kirkby, Beard & Co., Redditch, supply needles of a reliable quality.

Blunt-pointed tapestry needles, No. 18, suitable for needle-weaving, crewel and chenille needles, and the excellent “Scientific Sharps” may be had from most of the needlework depots, or through any of their agents.

Simple wooden looms for the making of braids, hat bands, ties, girdles, etc., with instructions and with a piece of work started, may be had from the Dryad Works, 42, Nicholas Street, Leicester. The same firm supplies raffia in brilliant colours and raffia needles.

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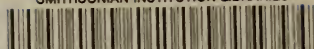
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